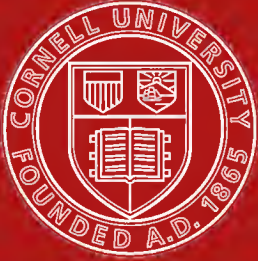


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GEORGE II. AND HIS MINISTERS

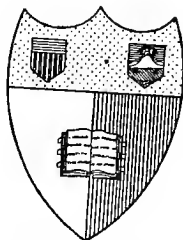
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GEORGE II. AND HIS MINISTERS

BY
REGINALD LUCAS
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DEDICATED
TO MY SISTER
MRS. AUBREY MAUDE

PREFACE

SOME time ago I set myself the task of examining the career of Lord Carteret, with the intention of trying to draw the story of his life out of the oblivion into which it has been allowed to sink. For reasons which will be stated presently, insuperable difficulties soon became evident. Historians agree in confessing their lack of information, and his character seems destined to remain an historical mystery.

It was, however, impossible to pursue these investigations without becoming deeply interested in the period during which he lived and in the men who were his colleagues or opponents. This volume makes no pretence to original or profound research; but to put into convenient form the lessons to be learnt from familiar writers may be not entirely useless.

I have been surprised to find how many people have never heard Lord Carteret's name: perhaps it is not impertinent to suggest that memories are capable of becoming dim concerning even the most eminent men of their time.

It is the modest purpose of my book to serve such readers as are conscious of an infirmity of this kind.

Apology may be required for anything in the nature of an essay on Chatham whilst Lord Macaulay is still to be read. It can only be pleaded in excuse that as Chatham cannot be excluded, the risk of contrast has to be incurred.

Footnotes have been avoided as far as possible, and are only introduced when authority for a statement seems to be required.

REGINALD LUCAS.

*Albany, Piccadilly,
September, 1910.*

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GEORGE II. AND HIS MINISTERS

GEORGE II. AND HIS MINISTERS.

IT would certainly be unjust to say that nothing in the reign of George II. became him like the leaving it: it would not be far from the truth to say that nothing became him less than his manner of beginning. George I. had, in his dying moments, cried out for his beloved Osnabrück, urging his servants to make haste. His heart had been there always: he craved for one more sight of his old home: and even if it must be set against him that he never became a good Englishman, nobody can reproach him for this last outburst of fidelity.

However, he was dead (June 1727), and it became the duty of Sir Robert Walpole to tell the new King. George II. was one of the plainest speakers that ever lived. Many are the amazing stories of his bluntness: he seemed incapable of repressing what was in his mind, and was surely outrageous even at a time when propriety was not rigidly observed nor sensibilities very easily shocked.

Between him and his father there had been no pretence of affection, and that rancorous aversion which had embittered his own relations as a son, he was to cherish and assist in maintaining unto the third and fourth generation of his house—the worst and most unfortunate characteristic of the new dynasty. Perhaps in

GEORGE II.

Germany it was not unusual and not considered reprehensible. 'The history of the boyhood of Frederic the Great,' we are told,* 'is painfully interesting. Oliver Twist in the parish workhouse, Smike at Dotheboys Hall, were petted children when compared with this wretched heir apparent of a crown Frederic William's palace was hell his son Frederic and his daughter Wilhelmina were in especial manner objects of his aversion.' It was otherwise in England. Not so had James babbled of his 'Baby Charles:' very different had been the tenderness of Charles I. for his children: even the selfishness of Charles II. had been penetrated by affection for poor Monmouth. The new King, then, did not lament his dead parent and was not at all likely to feign remorse. He seems to have thought the news too good to be true. Walpole found his sovereign enjoying his sleep after dinner, for which indulgence he had undressed and gone to bed. Accounts differ on the point as to whether he received his minister with his breeches in his hand or on his person: it is certain that when he learnt the business of his visitor he blurted out in German-English that it was a lie, and went back to his bed. This unkingly conduct was not to be endured. At the risk of disturbing his rest, as well as his temper, Walpole was obliged to ask for instructions: and he was curtly told to go to Sir Spencer Compton.

Walpole had been the servant of George I., and was therefore looked on with suspicion by his son. Moreover the atmosphere of jealousy and intrigue which had hung over the rival Courts had been loaded with charges and in-

* Macaulay: *Essays*.

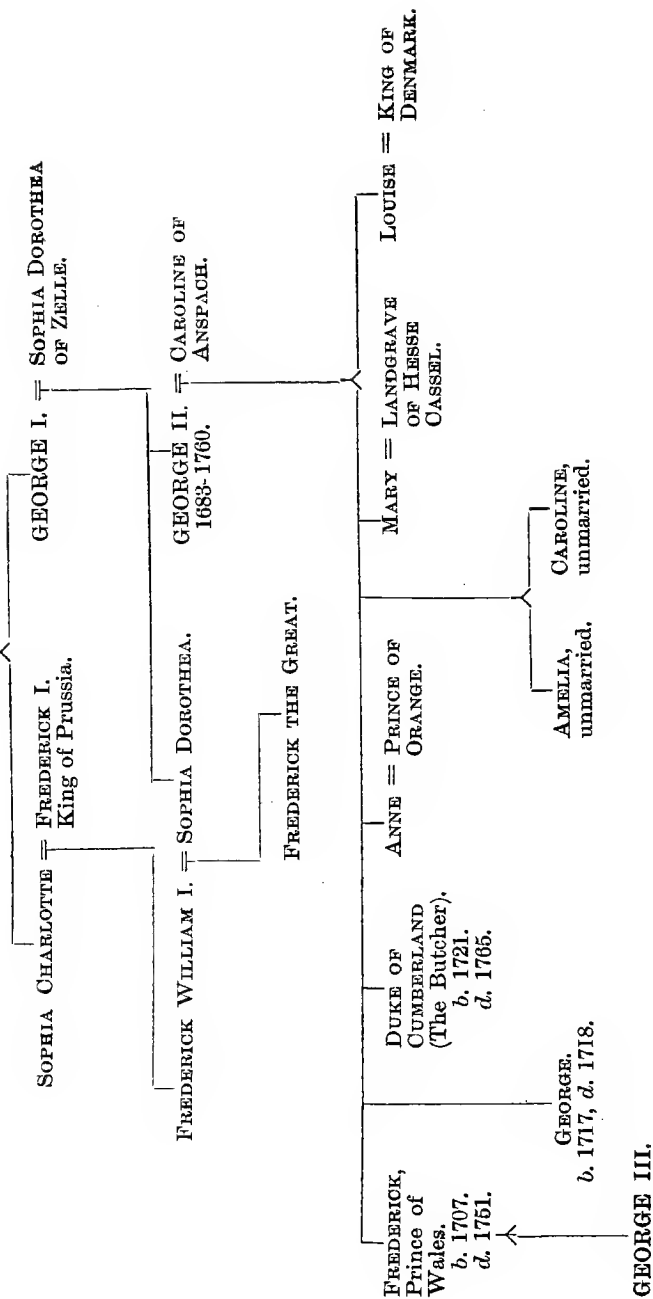
GEORGE II.

sinuations, and Walpole had been represented to the Prince of Wales as an enemy. To such a man as Walpole the King's commission was an insult, but his robust spirit and rude habits of life saved him from any sting of wounded feelings. He hastened to call upon his successor.

Lord Hervey sums up Compton in a few words : ' his only pleasures were money and eating ' : but he was not a mere lout. He had filled many public offices ; he had been Speaker of the House of Commons. His record was creditable, and his abilities were respectable ; but he was not a match for Walpole. He accepted office without demur ; but he very soon discovered his incapacity. When he sat down to draft a King's speech for Parliament, his powers of conception and composition were so inadequate to his needs that he was forced to ask assistance from the man he had supplanted. Walpole was quite willing to give his help, and the draft was forthcoming : but when the King saw it he at once perceived that though the hand was the hand of Sir Spencer, the voice was the voice of Sir Robert. When Parliament met he commanded them both to prepare speeches—' he shook his head at poor Sir Spencer's and approved of Sir Robert's.' Compton's short hour was past, and as Lord Wilmington he retired to enjoy the easier honours of a peerage.

It will be well to explain the new King's situation in the world and say something of his experiences. The following table shows who were his nearest relations :—

ELECTRESS SOPHIA.



GEORGE II.

George II. was thoroughly German. His grandmother, the Electress, had been a sister of Charles I.; but he had been born in Germany, and reared in a German atmosphere; his wife was a German; he was nephew to one King of Prussia, cousin and brother-in-law to another.

His wife, Caroline, was the daughter of the Margrave of Anspach* and Eleanor, Princess of Saxe Eisenach. The Margrave died early and his widow married the Elector of Saxony; upon which Caroline made her home in Berlin, and had the advantage of being educated under the influence and guidance of Sophia Charlotte, whose love of learning and the society of learned men she was quick to share. Here she was offered a brilliant marriage in the person of the Archduke Charles of Austria, afterwards Emperor. How dazzling this bait might seem to a young princess we may judge by reading the Imperial title: in a letter to the Spanish Minister, Ripperda, written twenty years later, the man she had rejected begins, ‘Don Charles par la Clémence divine Empereur des Romains, toujours auguste, roy d’Allemagne, de Castille, de Leon, d’Arragon, des deux Siciles, de Jerusalem, de Bohème, Hongrie, Dalmatie, Croacie, et des Indes, archiduc d’Autriche, duc de Bourgogne, de Milan, et de Brabant, comte de Flandres, &c.’ and signs at the end, ‘Moy le Roy.’ The assumption of such world-wide sway was, of course, to a great extent fictitious, and of the same kind as the claim of our later kings to be kings of France; nevertheless, the traditions were splendid and the alliance calculated to satisfy the keenest

* Or Ansbach. The Margrave was a kinsman of the Elector of Brandenburg, afterwards King of Prussia.

GEORGE II.

worldly ambition. But Caroline had religious scruples : she refused to become a Roman Catholic.

The King of Prussia, although he was a Protestant, was in favour of the project : his ward was resolute. Her conduct in this crisis has been variously interpreted : Addison wrote, ' Providence kept a store in reward for such an exalted virtue ; and by the secret methods of its wisdom, opened a way for her to become the greatest of her sex among those who profess that faith to which she adhered with so much Christian magnanimity.' Gay, in poetical spirit, declared : ' that she scorned an Empire for religion's sake.' Lord Morley is less romantic : he says that by considering the two religions she lost faith in both. Her biographer, the late Mr. W. H. Wilkins, tells us that in consequence of this renunciation she set up for being an authority on theology for the rest of her life. There is no doubt that she retained a marked taste for serious conversation. She continued after her marriage to correspond with Leibnitz on the most abstract sciences, and she kept learned divines on the alert with her inquiries and arguments : Hoadly, Clarke, Hare, and Sherlocke are named as her favourite counsellors. In these researches she was not likely to receive sympathy or encouragement from the husband whom she had preferred ; and as often as her occupation came under his notice he spluttered out his ' puppies ' and ' fools ' and ' stuff,' as, it will be seen, he was accustomed to do whenever subjects were discussed that were not of his choosing.

Whatever her motive may have been, she refused the Archduke Charles ; married George, then Electoral Prince,

GEORGE II.

in 1705 ; and became one of the most memorable Queens-Consort of England.

George II. and his wife lived at a time of lean years, so far as portrait painters were concerned. In the National Portrait Gallery and at Kensington there are pictures by Hudson, Seeman, Shackleton, and Pine, but there was no Van Dyck and no Sir Joshua to make them immortal. Historians agree in presenting George as a fat and choleric little man, and truly his recorded words and actions coincide with this conception : but in his pictures he is not very corpulent, and has a merry cast of face. In old age he appears to have shrivelled rather than to have become bloated : but we prefer to think of him as puffing and bustling about his business ; full-blooded and officious as a hale and hearty corporal. We know, at all events, that he complained of the Queen's tendency to grow stout, yet she too is represented as rather a slender woman. She was fair, and undoubtedly possessed good looks. One painter gives her a mincing air, but that may have been because he was an indifferent artist and had to let the expression come as it would. Let us form our own images of King and Queen, and proceed.

George had never enjoyed the incalculable benefit of a good mother's care. Sophia Dorothea is only remembered as the heroine or victim of a domestic tragedy. Whether her transgressions were flagrant, or her indiscretions were seized upon and magnified by her enemies to effect her ruin, is capable of argument. The fact remains that she was condemned to spend her life in confinement without hope of mercy or pardon from her inexorable husband.

GEORGE II.

It is alleged by a large majority of writers that the quarrel between George I. and his son had its origin here. Lord Hervey, who was for a long time in close contact with George II., says he never heard him speak of his mother or show any consciousness of her existence: but Hervey spoke well of very few people, and George II. was not one of these. On the other hand, it is asserted that no sooner was George I. dead than the son produced and hung in conspicuous places two portraits of his mother which had long been lying hid. However that may be, he never saw her, although he is said to have made an attempt. Another cause for estrangement has been found in the tendency of the Electress Sophia to treat her son with jealous reserve and bestow all her favour and encouragement upon the grandson.

Of all contemporary authorities Lord Hervey ought to be the most reliable. He was long an inmate of the Palace, and kept a careful record of everything that happened within its walls and without. But his evidence is prejudiced. He must have been a miserable man. He aspired to the highest rank in wit and statesmanship, and he was only fitted for the post which he really occupied, and which we should describe as tame cat to the Queen.* He amused her, and she was fond of him; for her he entertained his single instinct of attachment and respect. He was a capable composer of verses or pleasantries for the Drawing-room, but in an evil hour he chose to cross swords with Pope, who summed him up as 'a white curd of asses' milk,' to which Hervey could produce no repartee. His daily diet was supposed to consist of asses' milk with a

* He was for a time Privy Seal, but he is best known as Vice-Chamberlain.

GEORGE II.

biscuit ; once a month he ate an apple ; he partook liberally of emetics. His figure was emaciated, and his face so ghastly that he had to plaster it with paint.

This is what we are told ; but either the facts were grossly exaggerated or Vanloo flattered him ; for the portrait in the National Portrait Gallery conveys no such painful impression. He cannot have been utterly feeble and emasculated. Having become involved in a pamphlet conflict with Pulteney, he considered his honour to be so far outraged that he went out manfully and fought a duel with his tormentor, both shedding and drawing blood.

He deemed himself ill-used because high office was denied him, and he took his revenge, as disappointed politicians will, by disparaging the King's Ministers. His discontent extended to the King himself, whom he persistently maligns and ridicules. He was not the kind of man to win the confidence of King George, and he finally lost his favour by a speech very ill-suited to the lips of a courtier : 'The titles of Government belong not to persons who exercise all the authority of it : your Majesty bears the name of King and wears the crown, whilst all the authority of the one and the power of the other is exercised by another. My Lord Carteret has the credit in your closet and the name of your minister, whilst Mr. Pulteney possesses and exercises the powers of both.' In telling this story he adds, 'I always took care to except Lord Carteret out of every fault I laid to his ministers' charge, saying I knew him to be the only man of sense about His Majesty.'

Vanity and malice go far to discredit the testimony

GEORGE II.

of any man, and large allowance must be made in accepting what might have been a record worthy of Boswell. He frankly admits that he has no doubt posterity will think him malicious; they cannot know how true he is—that, posterity must at times take leave to doubt. Not the least strange incident in his life was that, in spite of his affectation, his ugliness, and his vindictive temper, he was loved by Princess Caroline. When he is not occupied with personalities, his journal is interesting and valuable. One cannot read without attention such passages as these: after explaining that France and Spain had between them sixty or seventy ships of the line of battle, he goes on: ‘So if England had not a naval force ready to make head against such a power, we must give up the empire of the seas;’ a sentiment which might be claimed as the first demand for a two-power standard. At the same time he was a stout advocate for retrenchment in time of peace, and complained that closer economy was needed; although he did not approve ‘the nonsense of those ignorant and hypocritical lamenters who talk of our being ruined.’ Yet he was unable to see how England could raise 1,000,000*l.* a year more than she was raising then. Here follow some notes which cannot be overlooked. His son, the third Earl of Bristol—for he himself married, but died before his father—makes this comment: ‘What would my father have said had he lived in these days (1777) and seen seventeen millions raised in a year?’ To which Mr. Croker, as editor, adds: ‘What would either have said to our raising for 1846, a year of peace, fifty-three millions?’ What would any of them think of our modern budgets? Amongst the ‘ignorant and hypocritical

GEORGE II.

lamenters' he presumably numbered Lord Lonsdale, who left the Government in despair: 'England was brought to the dilemma of being undone by the expenses of war if it took that part, or by the turbulence of faction, luxury, and corruption, if it remained in the inactivity of peace.'

As a specimen of Hervey's critical style, here is his comment on Sir Joseph Jekyll, Master of the Rolls: 'He was always puzzled and confused in his apprehension of things, more so in forming an opinion upon them, and most of all in his expression and manner of delivering that opinion when it was formed; so that his brain, from a very uncommon formation, was, in conceiving sentiments and forming judgments, like some women, who, instead of plain natural and profitable births, are for ever subject to false conceptions and miscarriages, or, if they go out of their time, bring a dead offspring, or a child turned the wrong way.'

We return to the contemplation of George, King and Elector; and it may be said at once that in England the addition of Hanover was not looked upon with pride. The new sister state was regarded as a Cinderella and treated, if not with contempt, certainly with jealousy and coldness. The Hanoverian mistresses and ministers were eyed askance as interlopers; Hanoverian interests were viewed with suspicion; and it is true that the King's position as ruler of a Continental state opened the way to awkward entanglements. The first Georges were not likely to let their German territory suffer without resistance, and Englishmen were not prepared to endure large sacrifices in support of their Sovereigns' predilection.

GEORGE II.

The difficulty was fairly stated by Sir Thomas Robinson to Lord Harrington in 1731: 'As long as this Court [Vienna] will regard the King only as Elector with respect to his Electoral affairs, and as long as the Elector will push them as King of England and independent of the Empire, those two contradictions will thwart the best intentions imaginable.'

In 1731 the King brought consternation on his Ministers by entering into negotiations with Austria, without their knowledge, in order to protect Hanover at a time of international conflict. The King of Prussia frankly admitted that he knew he could only press England by threatening Hanover. In 1744 there was an active agitation in favour of breaking the connection. One member of Parliament declared that 'Hanover was a millstone about our necks, and that it neither would nor could be borne with, and that it must sink itself.' Looking back now, it seems that during the union of the two crowns, nothing but rare good fortune can have warded off disastrous adventures throughout a long series of European complications.

George I. had been sincerely and avowedly German: he had never pretended to care for his new home, and never even attempted to learn the language of his new subjects. He began badly by arriving in London with an ostentatious display of ready-made courtiers and courtesans. His leading ladies were Schulemberg and Kielmansegge, both ugly women; one so gaunt, the other so ample, that they were known as the maypole and the elephant. Their first appearance drew forth such unfriendly comments that the ladies were alarmed, and one of them, leaning

GEORGE II.

out of the carriage window, cried 'Goot pipple, what for you abuse us? we come for all your goots.' 'Yes, damn ye, and for all our chattels too,' was the quick response. The King had no intention of adapting his domestic arrangements to new conditions and he was faithful after his fashion. The legality of a life-peerage was not to be matter for dispute until 1856, but George I. anticipated the idea to some extent by creating his favourites Duchess of Kendal and Countess of Darlington for life. He also bestowed a life-peerage on the Duchess of Kendal's niece, whom he created Countess of Walsingham, a compliment generally attributed to the fact that she was their own child. Schulemberg on her side was more than faithful unto death. So true and enduring a devotion did the King inspire, that his loss compelled her to habits of piety and superstition. One day a black raven flew into her room: this she welcomed in more comfortable spirit than the mourner in Poe's legend: she at once recognised the reincarnation of her Lord, and joyously housed the bird in a golden cage.

George II. began his career upon a different principle. Either because he was excited by the expansion of his own prospects, or because he habitually ran counter to his father, he met the case by declaring, 'I have not one drop of blood in my veins which is not English and at the service of my father's subjects.' He did not utterly disavow his promise: he did fight for England and may even deserve the credit which a modern poet has bestowed on Henry V. of being 'the last of our adventurer kings:' but however much his hatred of his father was ingrained, his love of England was only skin-deep. His affections

GEORGE II.

were set upon Hanover, and after a time his constant desire was to escape thither. In 1736 when he was troubled by the agitation of the Bishops concerning the Quakers Bill, he exclaimed, 'I am sick to death of all their foolish stuff, and wish with all my heart that the devil may take all your bishops and the devil take your minister, and the devil take the Parliament, and the devil take the whole island, provided I can get out of it and go to Hanover.' There was a special attraction for him there in Madame Walmoden, upon whom, in imitation of his father's practice, he conferred a life-peerage: she became Countess of Yarmouth.

Closely allied as he was to the Prussian royal family, it nearly came to pass that the connection was made even more intimate. George I. before his death had paid a visit to Berlin, partly to discuss a project upon which his daughter, the Queen, had set her heart; this was a double marriage between her son (afterwards Frederick the Great) and her daughter Wilhelmina, with her niece Amelia and her nephew Frederick (afterwards Prince of Wales). The two bridegrooms professed great eagerness for the adoption of the scheme. Frederick of Prussia is said to have persuaded himself that he was very much in love! Frederick of England was equally ready to play his part: both young men were pining for freedom. George I. was disposed to give his consent, and negotiations were only interrupted by his death. After a short interval the project was revived, and now the humorous situation was displayed of two sons determined to run away from home and press their fortunes at the Courts of their respective fathers-in-law. George II. told

GEORGE II.

Lord Townshend, 'I should be very glad to take care of the Prince of Prussia in case he should take his refuge with me;' but when he heard that his own son contemplated something of the same kind, he took a very different line. He sent for his son from Hanover, where he had preferred to leave him, and made him the object of his severe displeasure: and here was an end of the great scheme.

In fact all parties were at cross purposes. Neither king cared for the proposed daughter-in-law and the King of Prussia had chosen the Princess of Bevern* for his son. He further stipulated that if his son did marry Amelia he should be made Stadtholder of Hanover. George II. refused this, but grudgingly consented to make his daughter Regent. He hated his cousin and brother-in-law, the King: he had hated him all his life; personal dislike may have been aggravated by the knowledge that there had been a possibility of a marriage between Frederick William and Caroline. He was by no means inclined to smooth his son's path before him, and he was heartily glad to be quit of further negotiations. But this was not to be the end of their difficulties. Frederick William was forming his regiment of giants, and in search of likely recruits he trespassed upon Hanoverian territory. This was too much for King George, who at once challenged his royal relative to fight a duel. The King of Prussia was willing enough, and a place of meeting was actually chosen. History was denied one of its most picturesque passages, and possibly escaped considerable modification when these fiery monarchs were persuaded not to risk their

* Coxe: *Walpole*.

GEORGE II.

lives, on the ground that they would appear undignified and ridiculous.

George II. presented a combination of qualities that no man is expected to possess. He was a bully and a braggart: yet he was undeniably brave. Sir Walter Scott says of him in *The Heart of Midlothian*, 'whose most shining quality was courage in the field of battle, and who endured the office of King of England without ever being able to acquire English habits or any familiarity with English dispositions.' He 'loved heroism and flattery' was said of him by a contemporary. In 1708 he had served as a volunteer under Marlborough, and had distinguished himself at Oudenarde by leading a cavalry charge. By a picturesque coincidence there was fighting on the side of the French, James Stuart, heir and aspirant to the British throne, George's rival and opponent in something beyond the issue of the battle. James fought also at Malplaquet: we know that Esmond saw him and saluted him there:* but he did not regard him as his king.

'Did you see the King at Oudenarde, Harry?' his mistress asked. She was a staunch Jacobite, and would no more have thought of denying her King than her God.

'I saw the Hanoverian only, Harry said. 'The Chevalier de St. George——'

'The King, sir, the King,' said the ladies and Miss Beatrix; and she clapped her pretty hands and cried, "Vive le Roy."

Esmond also tells us that at Oudenarde George conducted himself 'with the spirit and courage of an approved

* Book III. chap. i.

GEORGE II.

soldier,' but Thackeray had no great admiration for the King, and tells us elsewhere that his only merit was that, like his father, he preferred Hanover and left England to govern herself.*

That he was brave, then, is beyond dispute; and he was not without reputation as a leader of men. If Hervey is to be believed, the Emperor offered him the command of his army in 1734. This, however, may have been alleged in one of the King's boasting moods. Hervey says that Walpole heard of the proposal in advance, and prepared his master to refuse it. It is certain that Walpole was, as usual, striving hard to keep his country out of war and that the Emperor knew where his policy was thwarted. Writing to Count Kinski on July 31st, 1734, he complains that 'England has never failed to give me promises, both before and since the commencement of the war; but instead of fulfilling them, she has even favoured my enemies. . . . I am fully convinced that those who persuade the King to act in this manner, are not better inclined to the King and to the nation than to me.'

But it is certainly upon his exploits at Dettingen that George's military fame must rest. Here he found himself in the thick of a desperate battle. Lord Stair was in command of the allied troops fighting for Maria Theresa against the French, but George had no hesitation in playing the part of king and leader. His horse showed signs of bolting, so he jumped off declaring he would trust to his own legs: they would not run away. The year was 1743 and he was therefore sixty years old;

* *Four Georges.*

GEORGE II.

we have already accepted the statement that he was fat, but his ardent spirit was undaunted. 'Don't tell me of danger,' he roared out when somebody urged him not to expose himself; 'I'll be even with them. Now, boys; now for the honour of England; fire, and behave bravely, and the French will soon run.' Which, indeed, they did.

This heroic little figure deserves the enthusiastic eulogy which Sam Weller passed upon his beloved master at Bristol: 'Blest if I don't think his heart must ha' been born five and twenty years arter his body, at least!' We are not accustomed to say very flattering things of the Georges, but due value must be attached to this episode. Let his conduct and his language here be contrasted with the persuasive talk of George IV. when he related how he had served gallantly at Waterloo.

It has been said that George was a bully and a braggart: let us see how these charges are to be proved. The person whom he undoubtedly loved best, because respect and admiration were his inspiration, was his wife, and her he bullied more than any one; unless it were his son, whom he hated. Caroline had a most difficult part to play. She was a devoted wife and a loyal help-mate. Her husband's happiness and the country's honour were her incessant care. Fortunately she perceived in Walpole her best guide and counsellor, so far as the latter was concerned, and she became his steadfast ally. Her business then was to manage the King without his knowing it. 'The fools imagined, perhaps, they could frighten me; but they must not think they have got a Stuart on the throne, or, if they do, they will find themselves mistaken,' he said on one occasion. Coming

GEORGE II.

back to this theme he laid it down that Charles II. had been governed by mistresses, James II. by priests, William III. by his ministers, Anne by her women: 'who do they say governs now?' he demanded; and the meek Queen said nothing, not caring for the credit of authority so much as the consciousness of its possession. George hated illness: he never would allow that he was ill himself, nor tolerate illness in others. The Queen, in an attack of gout, would soak her aching feet in cold water, so that she might get on her boots in time to go walking with him.

Of any delicacy of feeling the King was incapable. His visits to Mrs. Howard (afterwards Lady Suffolk) were as much part of his daily life as his valet's arrival to call him in the morning. Many people believed that the relations between her and the King were nothing more than what are known as platonic: 'No established mistress of a sovereign,' says Horace Walpole, 'ever enjoyed less brilliancy of the situation than Lady Suffolk,' which suggests the harsher view. But whether platonic or otherwise, she was the only attraction that took him away from his wife. Every evening at nine he went to her for three or four hours, arriving 'with such dull punctuality that he frequently walked up and down the gallery for ten minutes with his watch in his hand, if the stated minute was not arrived.' Some one said of her that she had the scandal of being the King's mistress without the pleasure; the confinement without the profit.

When he went to Hanover and fell under the spell of Walmoden, he was equally frank and unashamed. He wrote to the queen detailed reports of his passion and the

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progress of his courtship, to which she patiently replied that she was but one woman, and an old woman, and he might love more and younger women.* On another occasion when he heard that the Prince of Modena intended to bring to England his wife, the daughter of the Regent, Duke of Orleans, he wrote to Caroline to say that he understood the lady was assailable, and that he wished to try his luck—‘*un plaisir que je suis sûr, ma chère Caroline, vous savez bien aise de me procurer, quand je vous dis combien je le souhaite.*’ It is to be hoped that she found some consolation in the strange encouragement given to her by the Archbishop of York, who professed himself glad to find that her Majesty was so sensible a woman as to like her husband should divert himself.

During one of George’s visits to Hanover, the Queen did a little re-arrangement of the pictures in the palace, removing some of the worst. The King knew nothing and cared less about pictures, but no sooner did he come back than he insisted on everything being replaced, in order to assert his authority. ‘I do not believe,’ says Hervey, ‘there ever lived a man to whose temper benevolence was so absolute a stranger.’ Amongst other imaginary accomplishments he prided himself, like many conceited people, on his knowledge of medicine: the Duke of Newcastle wrote to his brother that ‘the King is a bit of a doctor:’ and he had the royal passion for braids

* Lord Chancellor King suggests that this extraordinary answer was prompted by Walpole for the purpose of keeping George in a good temper, but this need not be. The Queen’s patience and humility and her habitual plainness of speech are sufficient to account for her altruistic philosophy.

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and buttons, in which the Queen encouraged him for the purpose of keeping his mind diverted from more serious matters.

One does not necessarily learn to think of George II. as a cruel man. He was obstinate and selfish and conceited, but by no means inhuman. A story is told against him to this effect: one Hyam, a Jew, had been condemned to death for clipping gold coin, and the King refused to commute his sentence on the ground that the 'ill consequences of this crime are so bad that I am of opinion it deserves no mercy.' But we have to bear in mind the standard of justice which existed then, and we have also to be told that his minister, Townshend, had written: 'The crime is of so heinous a nature that I believe Your Majesty will think proper to let the law take its course.' There remains, therefore, no extreme need for apology on the King's behalf.

He was not without a sense of humour. When the Duke of Newcastle expressed an opinion that Wolfe was mad: 'Mad, is he?' said the King; 'then I hope he will bite some others of my generals.' Again: he had a special fondness for the Scots Greys, who had once driven the French into the Danube: a French Marshal was praising some of the cavalry that had been engaged there—'but perhaps Your Majesty has never seen them.' 'No, but my Scots Greys have,' was the ready answer.

In reply to all complaints of his frequent journeys to Hanover, he urged that his English subjects were continually going to their country seats: Hanover was his country seat. And he took care to be as disagreeable as possible when his ministers asked permission to retire to

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their homes. To the Duke of Grafton he replied, 'With your great corps of twenty stone weight, no horse, I am sure, can carry you within hearing, much less within sight of your hounds.' And when he had been forced to return from the charms of his Walmoden in Hanover, his temper to every one was that of a spoilt and petulant child. Of his manner of addressing his wife this will serve as an example. Something had been said of the tax that was laid upon the Queen by the tips which were expected of her whenever she visited a private house: 'Then she may stay at home as I do,' said the King. 'You don't see me running into every puppy's house to see his new chairs and stools. Nor is it for you,' turning to his consort, 'to be running your nose everywhere and trotting about the town to every fellow that will give you some bread and butter, like an old girl that loves to go abroad, no matter whether it be proper or no.' We have seen how he dealt with her taste for theological discussion, and with her attempt to clear the palace of its worst pictures. More offensive still were his strictures upon her honest appetite, her fondness for 'stuffing' as he called it, and her tendency to grow fat. He must have bored so intelligent a woman almost beyond endurance. He seldom left her, and insisted on her entire attention to his interminable talk, without any occupation for her mind or her fingers. One of his daughters used to avoid his conversation by pretending to sleep; but no such privilege was allowed to the Queen.

Chesterfield said of King George that he was very well bred: and Chesterfield prided himself on being a judge of breeding. 'A king,' said he, 'must be great in mind

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who can let himself down with ease to the social level and no lower: he was rather a weak than a bad man or King.' The Queen, according to him, was upon the whole *the agreeable woman*; she was liked by most people; but *the Queen* was neither esteemed, beloved, nor trusted, by anybody but the King.

Certainly there was not much of the grace of good breeding in the King's behaviour during the saddest passage of all—the Queen's illness and death. She knew she was suffering from a serious internal malady, but she stubbornly concealed the truth, partly perhaps from natural fortitude, partly no doubt on account of his inveterate impatience of sickness. In time, he was obliged to recognise her suffering, and the doctors were called in. It may well be believed that both the clinical and surgical resources of the day were primitive according to our standard of excellence. She had the best advice and most skilful treatment available, but one cannot read the description of her treatment without a shudder, or withhold admiration from her splendid courage. And her sufferings must have been sorely aggravated by the attentions of her husband. Now that she could not 'stuff' he forced food upon her, in spite of her inability to retain it, angrily demanding how she expected to be well if she would not eat. When her racked and weary body was in dire need of rest, he kept her constantly disturbed by throwing himself on the bed beside her, fidgeting and talking. When she tried to rest he was at her again: 'Comment peut on fixer ses yeux comme ça? Vos yeux ressemblent à ceux d'un veau à qui on vient de couper la gorge!' At the end, came the amazing dialogue which

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must be repeated once more. She told him that when she was gone she hoped he would marry again. 'Non,' sobbed the King, 'j'aurai des maîtresses.' The Queen was not shocked; but the thoughts of Lady Deloraine, of Lady Suffolk, of Walmoden, passed through her mind, and in a gush of self-pity she murmured, 'Ah, mon Dieu, cela n'empêche pas.'

Hervey gives a ludicrous account of George's conduct when she died. He wept and sobbed abundantly. Suddenly he stopped, to brag of the faith and attachment which he had inspired in so excellent a woman: then he broke into a fit of laughter at the recollection of some ungainly courtier who had attempted to put on a solemn and doleful demeanour.

That his grief was sincere and very keen cannot be doubted. One morning, soon after her death,* he said to one of the Hanoverian suite, 'I hear you have a picture of the Queen which she gave you, and that is a better likeness than any in my possession. Bring it to me here.' When he saw it he burst into tears: 'Put it upon that chair, and leave me until I ring the bell.' Two hours later he rang. 'Take the picture away,' he said; 'I never yet saw a woman worthy to buckle her shoe.'

Perhaps the best proof of his affliction was that he voluntarily assumed the liability for the pensions which in the liberality of her heart the Queen had bestowed very freely. 'I will have no one the poorer for her death but myself,' he said. Yet he was not of a generous disposition. When he grew weary of Mrs. Howard, he offered no provision for her future: he wanted to be rid of her without

* December 1737.

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expense, and insulted her so deliberately that she desired to resign. The Queen was good-natured enough to protect her, upon which the King grumbled, : ‘I do not know why you will not let me part with a deaf old woman of whom I am weary :’ and when he heard that she had married Lord Suffolk, he wrote : ‘J’étois extrêmement surpris de la disposition que vous m’avez mandé que ma vieille maîtresse a fait de son corps en mariage à ce vieux goutteux George Berkeley, et je m’en réjouis fort. Je ne voudrois pas faire de tels présens à mes amis ; et quand mes ennemis me volent, plut à Dieu que ce soit toujours de cette façon’ : a letter which says little either for his good breeding or his good heart.

The only present he ever gave to Walpole was a diamond : and that was cracked. He once gave the Queen some Hanoverian horses : he charged her with their keep, and made use of them himself. On one occasion, he continued to count his loose pocket money with such minute repetition, that the noise got on the nerves of one of the maids of honour, who boldly declared that if he did not make an end, she could not stay in the room. His quarrel with his son was based to a great extent on financial questions : these perhaps extended beyond mere meanness, and involved large principles : but there is no doubt that he was a parsimonious man. It was by undertaking to secure lavish terms from Parliament that Walpole recovered his ground after George’s succession. When the Duke of Cumberland consulted Sir Robert upon the best means of escaping the marriage with the Princess of Denmark, with which he was threatened, he received the astute advice to insist upon

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an ample and immediate settlement—which he followed with complete success. Erskine May, in his *Constitutional History of England*, says: ‘George III. succeeded to 172,605*l.*, which the late King—more frugal than any prince since Henry VII.—had saved out of his civil list.’*

The character of Caroline calls for separate and steady attention. One cannot read about her without admiring the Queen, besides being attracted to the woman, no matter what Chesterfield may say. Her speeches and opinions were not always delicate or pleasant, but one must not separate her from her age. ‘You could no more suffer in a British drawing-room under the reign of Queen Victoria,’ says Thackeray,† ‘a fine gentleman or fine lady of Queen Anne’s time, or hear what they heard and said, than you would receive an ancient Briton.’ Thus we must not be unduly pained when we learn that Queen Caroline made no secret of her interest in the connection which Walpole had formed with Miss Skerritt, making this comment, that ‘no doubt she has told him some fine story or other about her love and her passion, and that, poor man, avec ce gros corps, ces jambes enflées, et ce vilain ventre.’ Nor need we be distressed when we read of her encouraging the devotion to wine, which was the nasty custom of the day, by calling out at dinner, ‘There is honest Mr. Wentworth has not drunk enough.’ She was a kind woman, and felt that a man who was conspicuously sober had spent a very poor evening. Her conversation was not habitually coarse: indeed it may be deemed chaste at a time when charming maids of honour said and wrote things which would involve a flogging in the case

* i. 197.

† *Four Georges.*

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of a modern schoolboy. It was certainly no indication of an ungracious mind. Her most questionable conduct was in connection with her son, and if she was unduly severe with him, it may be said that he gave her provocation: also that she was only against him because, in choosing sides, she was bound to take that of her husband. She was naturally an affectionate mother. Once, when she was obliged to be separated for a time from her children, she exclaimed in her anguish, 'I can say since the hour I was born, I have not lived a day without suffering.'

She was a statesman: she had clear insight, tenacity, and reserve. She realised quickly that Walpole was the minister that the country needed and she supported him consistently. So loyal was she, that when the King was bent upon joining in the war of 1734, arising out of the Polish succession, she used her secret influence to dissuade him at Walpole's instigation, although her sympathies were decidedly with the spirited foreign policy. Sometimes she resented the Minister's bluntness of speech; for instance, when he told her in discussing family matters that Edward III. had made a large settlement on the Black Prince so that he need not be dependent on his minister, his mistress, or his queen. Still more difficult to hear with submission would be his advice to her to put up with Walmoden, because she herself was no longer young and attractive, and the King could not exist without the charms of a beautiful woman.

Nevertheless she was determined to support him. At the outset of the reign, she had publicly avowed her favour. When Compton was being worshipped as the rising

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star and Walpole was ignored as having fallen, she took immediate steps to put matters straight. At her Drawing-room she caught sight of Lady Walpole thrust into the background. 'There I am sure I see a friend,' she cried,* and it was at once made evident to the courtiers that they were leaning on a broken reed. And when she was dying, it was to Walpole, making his clumsy and sorrowful obeisance at the bedside, that she entrusted the care and guidance of the King.

But Walpole made a mistake which is not easy to explain, unless it was due to lack of fine feeling. He must surely have perceived that the Queen had wielded her influence over the King not because she was a woman, but because she was a clever woman. And he must have realised that a stupid woman would have been useless to him; a woman, unknown and perhaps unfriendly, something worse than useless. Nevertheless, his first impulse after Caroline's death was to supply her place. He must put the King into the hands of some woman through whom he himself could bring pressure to bear. He was advised to employ Princess Amelia, but this by no means fitted in with his philosophy. 'I was for the wife against the mistress,' he said, 'but I will be for the mistress against the daughters;' and to the Princesses he had the indecency to propose that they should at once send for Lady Deloraine or Walmoden to bring solace to their afflicted father, and generally to enliven the domestic circle.

The one occasion upon which Caroline came near to

* This is perhaps the only contemporary instance to be found of a minister's wife taking a part in public affairs.

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disaster was after the Porteous riots.* The story is familiar because Scott made it the theme of one of his best beloved novels. Two smugglers, Wilson and Robertson, were under sentence of death. Robertson, through Wilson's unselfish connivance, escaped. Wilson was hanged; and the people of Edinburgh rose. They cut down the dead body and turned in fury on the City Guard. The commander, John Porteous, gave the order to fire; some said he seized a musket and led the discharge. This he denied. However, he was tried, and sentenced to death. Caroline was at the moment acting Regent whilst the King was in Hanover, and upon her personal responsibility she ordered a reprieve. So little did this suit the spirit of revenge abroad in Edinburgh, that the Tolbooth was attacked and broken open, Porteous was dragged out and hanged upon a dyer's pole.

Caroline was furious, and insisted on visiting the people of Edinburgh with severe marks of her displeasure. Rather than submit to such an insult, she declared, she would make Scotland a hunting-field, to which the Duke of Argyle, who was proud enough and brave enough to stand up for his countrymen in the storm, made reply, 'In that case, Madam, I will take leave of your Majesty, and go down to my own country to get my hounds ready.'

There had been a good deal of muddle and still more of mystery about the affair. When the situation became grave the magistrates of Edinburgh decided to summon military assistance. Mr. Lindsay, member for the city, undertook to carry the message, but declined to bear written instructions, fearing, no doubt, the vengeance of

* 1736.

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the mob if he were caught. General Moyle, commanding the troops, refused to act upon a verbal requisition, being bound by red tape, and perhaps not liking to couple himself with the name of Porteous.* He afterwards tried to exonerate himself by saying that Lindsay was drunk† and never made any request at all; which need not be believed. Meanwhile the Tolbooth had been violated, the law defied, the Queen's authority flouted, and Porteous murdered.

The most astonishing part of the story is the secrecy and method with which the rising was conducted. All that foresight and tactical adroitness could suggest was successfully effected; the rioters vanished when their work was done. One drunken footman was charged, but was able to prove his innocence; nobody else was brought to justice, although a host of witnesses might have been forthcoming had they been willing to earn the reward of 200*l.* which was offered by Government. Lord Ilay wrote to Walpole that one of the leaders went straight away to a country church, where he received the sacrament and boasted of what he had done. Lord Waldegrave wrote to Walpole from Paris that Fleury 'was sure it was organized by better hands than the mob.' It was believed that Wilson had enjoyed the sympathy of the mob because he and Robertson were 'free traders' or smugglers, a class whom the public always supported in their struggles with officials: also because he had sacrificed himself to secure the escape of Robertson for whose complicity and arrest he felt himself to be respon-

* See his letter to the Duke of Newcastle. Coxe: *Walpole*, iii. 360.

† Ilay to Walpole, *ib.* 367.

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sible. But beyond that there was a widespread suspicion that the Jacobites were at work, and had seized an opportunity of driving a wedge between the people of Edinburgh and the King's Government. Others averred that it was the threatened violence of the Government that afterwards roused the Jacobite spirit. However that may be, the punishment which at first was to be terrible, was whittled down to nothing. There was an inquiry in the House of Lords in the course of which one witness horrified the Duke of Newcastle by explaining that the weapon used by the city guard was 'juist sic as ane shutes dukes and fools wi,' thereby signifying ducks and fowls. Porteous was pronounced to have been justified in firing in self-defence. The Duke of Argyle was foremost in deprecating severity, and in the end a mild measure passed through both Houses, disqualifying the Provost of Edinburgh from ever holding public office, and imposing on the city a fine of 2000*l.* for the benefit of the widow of Porteous. One Scotchman, however, was not pleased: 'There is an end of Government,' said the Lord Justice Clerk, 'if such parties be suffered to escape punishment.'

Let us now turn to King George in the character of a father. In 1751 he told his daughter, the Queen of Denmark, 'I know I did not love my children when they were young; I hated to have them running into my room; but now I love them as well as most fathers.' He appears to have tolerated his unmarried daughters, Amelia and Caroline; they served him for listeners, and he treated them more civilly than most people. One cannot resist a sentimental compassion for Amelia, or

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Emily, as she was called. We have seen how she was made a pawn in the game of international marriage and—to pursue the analogy—was not allowed to take the King. In 1731 the Prince of Prussia, to pacify his terrible father, was obliged to consent to an alliance with a princess of Brunswick Wolfenbüttel; but Amelia's hopes were not utterly dashed. In 1734 Horace Walpole, the elder, wrote thus to his brother from Berlin: 'The King of Prussia will not escape this illness; the gaining of the Prince royall may be of infinite consequence, he will immediately send away his wife and, by what I hear, the evidence of force upon him for fear of his life to make him consent to that marriage will be so strong, that there can be no difficulty in an absolute divorce with the power of remarrying, and his thoughts are entirely fixed upon the princess Amely.' But nothing came of it. She indulged in a flirtation of an advanced kind with the Duke of Grafton, the Lord Chamberlain; but she was doomed to die an old maid. She had friends who professed admiration of her good qualities, either in sincerity or for selfish ends; but she appears to have had an ungenerous nature, and to have been most happy when she was laying down the law to her little Court at Bath.

Princess Caroline, Lord Hervey's friend, was delicate, and seems to have had a gentle disposition. She and her mother, at all events, cherished a tender affection for one another. Upon the whole the Royal Family cannot be described as a united household; their one bond of sympathy was common detestation of the Prince of Wales.

When the eldest daughter Anne married the Prince of Orange in 1734 the King certainly showed some sensibility,

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although his prudence made no concession to emotion: he gave her 'a thousand kisses and a shower of tears, but not one guinea.' There was a great display of grief: the Queen was overcome. The bride, although she had no reluctance to the match, was distracted with grief at leaving home. No sooner had the agitation subsided after her departure, than it was revived. Adverse winds delayed the voyage and Princess Anne was back again. The King showed no displeasure here; but when once his daughter was safely out of the kingdom, his interest in her subsided. On one occasion when she was lying seriously ill at the Hague, he passed by on his way from Hanover without turning aside to visit her. Again, when the Princess on her travels contemplated a visit to London, she received an abrupt message that if she must pass through England at all, she must choose a route from port to port that came nowhere near the capital: this notwithstanding the notorious fact that she was expecting her confinement.*

Throughout the estrangement that existed between George II. and his son, the incidents of his own quarrel with his father were reproduced with startling fidelity. George I. had destroyed his wife's will because she had left everything to her son—so, at all events, the son declared. George II. in his turn suppressed his father's will because, it was alleged, he had left large jointures to his ladies. This may not have concerned Frederick directly, but his complaints were based to a great extent upon his having been defrauded of money to which he was entitled. George II. had been aggrieved because his

* Hervey.

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father was reluctant to leave him Regent without restriction during the King's absence in Hanover. He put the same slight upon his son. The immediate cause of the banishment of George II. from his father's house was the birth of a child: so it was in the case of Frederick. In both sequels the son deliberately made his Court a rival to the King's Court, and formed a political party in opposition to the King's servants; and in both cases Walpole had to employ the arts of his diplomacy to effect a reconciliation.

Strangest of all: George I. had contemplated introducing a measure into Parliament in accordance with which his son, upon succeeding to the throne of England, for which he himself cared nothing, should forfeit the crown of his beloved Hanover. His bitterness at the time must have been very great, for Lord Berkeley dared so far as to submit a scheme for kidnapping the Prince of Wales and carrying him off to America. In the next reign both King and Queen harboured a design of separating the two kingdoms and securing Hanover for their favourite son Cumberland, even if they could not prefer him before his elder brother in England.* The difference here is that

* The scheme of George II. is revealed in this entry in the Journal of Lord Chancellor King: 'June 24 (1725) Sir Robert Walpole went with me to Ockham and lodged there the night. He entered into free discourse. . . . Another negotiation had lately been on foot in relation to the two young princes, Frederick and William. The Prince (George II.) and his wife were for excluding Prince Frederick from the throne of England, but that after the King (George I.) and Prince (George II.) he should be elector of Hanover, and Prince William, King of Great Britain; but that the King said it was unjust to do it without Prince Frederick's consent, who was now of age to judge for himself, and so this matter now stood. But that Sir Robert Walpole had told the King that if he did not in his lifetime bring over Prince Frederick, he would never set his foot on English ground, so that he did not know whether the King, when he returned from Hanover, would not bring the Prince with him.' He did not come until 1729.

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George I. had no second son and it is not clear whom he wished to designate as his successor in Hanover.

The analogy fails again in this: George II. never saw his mother, but he thought of her with tenderness: Frederick lived at enmity with his mother and saw her only to make this evident. George II. was accustomed to talk complacently on the mutual obligations of fathers and sons, letting it be known that he was a model character and had nevertheless suffered much in both respects. How he had spoken of his father, whom he admittedly hated, is not recorded: his favourite epithets for his son were puppy, liar, scoundrel, hypocrite, and rascal.

It would be strange if there were no contemporary commendation of Frederick: a prince must be bad beyond redemption who finds nobody to sing his praises, especially one who may become King of England at any moment. It is admitted that his situation was not fortunate: 'He had a father that abhorred him, a mother that despised him, sisters that betrayed him, and a brother set up against him,' says Hervey, who united all these instincts of animosity in his own unbridled hatred of the Prince.

The following report is manifestly too good to be true, and was probably written with an ulterior object: 'He is,' writes Lady Bristol to her husband on the Prince's first appearance, 'the most agreeable young man it is possible to imagine, without being the least handsome; his person little, but very well made and genteel; a liveliness in his eyes that is indescribable, and the most obliging address that can be conceived. But the crown of all his perfec-

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tion is that great duty and regard he pays the King and Queen, with such a mixture of affection, as if obliging them were the greatest pleasure of his life; and they receive it with the utmost joy and satisfaction; and the father's fondness seems to equal the tenderness of the mother; so that, I believe, the world never produced a royal family so happy in one another.' Not even Lady Bristol could find much to say for his beauty. No portrait that has survived gives him any semblance of intellect, or stateliness, or charm, and the mounted figure by Dandridge in the National Portrait Gallery represents a monster with prodigious nose and mouth.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu had been satisfied with him as a boy: 'I am extremely pleased that I can tell you without either flattery or partiality that our young prince has all the accomplishments that it is possible to have at his age.' So had she written to Lady Bristol in 1716, when the Prince was nine. Later on he found favour with Frederick the Great, if Lord Marchmont* was correctly informed: 'Wassenaer said there was a great regard showed to the Prince of Wales by the King of Prussia, who had ordered him to tell the Prince that, if he were on the throne, he believed their differences could be soon adjusted.' Here it must be borne in mind that Frederick of Prussia's marriage projects had not been brought to a happy issue, and he might well prefer the brother of Amelia and the former suitor of his own sister, to the man who had not shown any flattering desire to have him for a son-in-law.

Frederick was not without spirit, and amongst the

* Papers of the Earl of Marchmont.

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demands which he made upon the King in 1734 was one for permission to serve in the campaign on the Rhine. The King's jealousy made it impossible; but the Queen appears to have been softened by this manly ambition, and we are told that she 'strove to prevent the ill consequences likely to result from the conversation.' On another occasion she came to his rescue and endeavoured to defend him before his father's wrath: 'Ce n'est qu'une indiscretion de page.' But whether habitual sympathy with her husband gradually alienated her or whether Frederick was indeed to blame, the sorrowful fact remains that there is an overwhelming balance of testimony in support of hostile sentiments. So early indeed as the marriage of the Princess Royal, which took place very soon after Frederick's arrival in England, we have Hervey's authority for symptoms of dislike. When Caroline was suffering from the agitation of parting with her eldest daughter, and no doubt very nervously excited, the Prince volunteered his services as a comforter. 'Oh, my God, this is too much,' was the mother's discouraging cry. At a later day we learn from the same source that she spoke of him as 'a nauseous beast and the greatest liar that ever lived.' Walpole completes the tragic picture by his assurance to Hervey, 'Zounds, my lord, he would tear the flesh off her bones with hot irons.'

Walpole's own opinion of the Prince was this: 'A poor, weak, irresolute, false, lying, dishonest, contemptible wretch, that nobody loves, that nobody will trust, that nobody believes, and that will trust everybody by turns, and that everybody by turns will impose upon, betray, mislead, and plunder.' Pelham had no praise for him:

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‘The eldest [brother],’ he wrote to the Duke of Newcastle, ‘loses esteem and confidence more and more every day; the youngest does not conduct himself so prudently as to make up for the unfortunate turn of the other.’ Horace Walpole does not give him a pleasant character: ‘He carried his dexterity [at gaming] into . . . commerce and was vain of it. His style of play did him less honour than the amusement.’ And the following anecdote does not bring him much credit: on one occasion he led the revels by assisting to roll Bubb Dodington in a blanket and send him bumping downstairs. There is nothing specially disreputable in this display of what we now call ‘ragging:’ it was in fashion, and we read of Lord Holderness being reprimanded for ‘playing blindman’s buff in the Summer at Tunbridge’ whilst he was Secretary of State; but Dodington was one of Frederick’s closest friends and supporters, yet here is a specimen of the treatment he received: ‘This is a strange country, this England,’ said the Prince: ‘I am told Dodington is reckoned a clever man, yet I got 5000*l.* out of him this morning and he has no chance of ever seeing it again.’

The Duke of Cumberland is known in history principally as the Butcher of Culloden. In the National Portrait Gallery there is a charming picture of him as a boy, by Jervas: very different is the coarse and bloated man of later days whom Morier painted. He had been present and was wounded at Dettingen, but perhaps his most creditable performance was at the battle of Fontenoy where, as some one put it, ‘the French were only not beat.’ The Duke commanded the English contingent,

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though 'he was subjected to the control of Marshal Königsegg, an Austrian general of acknowledged valour and experience, and obliged to consult the Prince of Waldeck, who commanded the Dutch.'* The Duke appears to have distinguished himself, and, according to contemporary evidence, if he had been better supported by the Dutch he might have come home a conquering hero. Philip Yorke wrote to Horace Walpole, 'The Duke's behaviour was by all accounts the most heroic and gallant imaginable.'

As it was, he hurried home with his army to confront Charles Stuart in Scotland, and on April 16th the battle of Culloden was fought. It is fair to assume that his instructions were drastic. On April 12th he wrote to the Duke of Newcastle, 'Though I could have wished the King's orders had been fuller, yet I take the hint and will do all in my power to put an end to the unhappy rebellion:' in a postscript he adds, 'Do not imagine that threatening military executions, and many other such things, are pleasing to do; but nothing will go down without it, in this part of the world.' Before he left Scotland in July, he wrote again to the Duke, 'I am sorry to leave this country in the condition it is in, for all the good that we have done is a little blood-letting, which has only weakened the madness, but not at all cured; and I tremble for fear that this vile spot may still be the ruin of the island and of our family. I know you will imagine . . . almost every word I say slander and that I am prejudiced . . . so I am; but by so many different incidents that have happened that

* Coxe: *Pelham*.

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I recollect the whole with horror.' He believed, and had perhaps been encouraged to believe, that there could be no security for his family until the Jacobites were exterminated. Compromise was impossible,* and clemency misplaced. Scotland was the soil on which the noxious weed of disaffection flourished: there it must be stamped to pieces. *Thorough* was the only policy. On the other hand it may be that he was cruel by nature, or that he became gradually hardened by experience. In 1747 he was abroad again, and on July 2nd he suffered defeat at Laffelt. Again the Dutch proved worthless, and the Austrians afforded no help. The Duke did not blame the latter: the conformation of the ground forced them to inactivity. The King of France described them as benevolent spectators and said 'the British not only paid for all, but fought all.' The French, at all events, were the victors, and the Duke's temper may have given way. Horace Walpole writes to George Montagu: 'The truth of the whole is, that the Duke was determined to fight at all events, which the French took advantage of. His Royal Highness's valour has shone extremely, but at the expense of his judgment. . . . His savage temper increases every day. George Boscawen is in a scrape with him by a court marshal of which he is one; it was appointed on a poor young soldier who, to see his friends, counterfeited a furlough only for a day. They ordered him two hundred lashes; but Nolkejumskoi [the Duke] who loves blood like a leech, insisted it was not enough—has made them sit three times and

* 'The Duke said publicly at his levée that (Lord Kilmarnock) proposed murdering the English prisoners.' Horace Walpole to George Montagu.

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swears they shall sit six months till they increase the punishment.'

In 1757 he was again in command of British troops for the purpose of repelling a French invasion of Hanover. This time he failed signally. He made terms with the enemy at Kloster Zeven, and he was not supported at home. He defended himself by averring that the King had authorised him to make any terms he could get ;* but he was disavowed, and this was the end of his career as a public servant. Horace Walpole says that no sooner was the Prince of Wales dead than the King began to be jealous of the Duke.† He had been sincerely grieved at the result of Fontenoy; he said his favourite son had disgraced him; and he indignantly repudiated his negotiations at Kloster Zeven. Yet it seems that his affection had endured to the end, for Horace Walpole wrote to George Montagu after the King's death, relating the provisions of his will as affecting the Duke: 'He owns he was the best son that ever lived, and had never offended him; a pretty strong comment on the affair of Closterseven!'

The Duke lived till 1765, and exercised considerable influence on the political movements and intrigues. His nearest approach to avowed authority was in connection with the provision of a regency in the event of the heir to the throne succeeding as a minor. The King asked Fox (1751) if he approved of the Bill before Parliament: 'Fox answered, "If you ask me, sir,—no. What I said against it was because what was said for it was against the Duke." The King told him, "I thank you for that: my

* Von Ruville: *Pitt*.

† *Memoirs*, i. 99.

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affection is with my son: I assure you, Mr. Fox, I like you the better for wishing well to him. The English nation is so changeable! I don't know why they dislike him. It is brought about by the Scotch, the Jacobites, and the English that don't love discipline."* Fox once told Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, that 'H.R.H. the Duke has not only more sense, but more court art too than all the ministers put together.'

So much for Frederick's younger and favoured brother. Very little is said about their relations towards each other, nor is there evidence of any attempt on the Duke's part to intrigue or profit by his father's predilection. That he and Frederick differed in politics is certain. 'I tremble for the old Whig cause that fixed us here and must support us here,' wrote the Duke to the Duke of Newcastle. Within a few months the Prince was writing to Sir Thomas Bootle, 'I hope they, the Pelhams, have not a strong majority, or adieu to my children, the constitution, and everything that is dear to me.' The Duke may safely be said to have allied himself with the Whig Party: he was a consistent supporter of the Pelhams. 'The Duke of Cumberland dreads Granville,' wrote Henry Pelham to his brother, in 1751, when a re-arrangement of the Cabinet enabled the King to bring back Granville as President of the Council. 'You know what I think of that measure,' he adds significantly. Again in 1757 the Duke refused to set out on his campaign until Pitt, who was Newcastle's rival and Fox's enemy, had been dismissed (April 6th, 1757).

Of the Prince of Wales it would be safer to say that he belonged not so much to the Tory Party as to the

* Horace Walpole: *Memoirs*, i. 159.

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Party of Opposition. Whenever the opponents of his father's Government were gathered together, there was he in the midst of them. In 1741, despite his chronic grievance about lack of income, he contracted great debts by supporting Opposition candidates; and it was a recognised fact that Leicester House was the headquarters of all those who were temporarily or permanently estranged from the Party in power. Carteret, Pulteney, Chesterfield, Lyttelton, Pitt either directed or supported the Prince's action at various times, whilst they were out of office. By one of these he was served with more zeal than discretion. In 1751 a letter from Lyttelton to his father, describing some intrigues that were being carried on with the Government by the Prince's friends, was opened in the Post Office, as a matter of course, and forwarded to Pelham.* There was nothing unusual in this, and the danger might have been foreseen. For example, as far back as 1727 Walpole had written to Townshend: 'I had the curiosity to open some of their (the Pulteney's) letters;' and diplomatic correspondence was intercepted without scruple. Sir James Graham certainly had plenty of precedents for his action at the Home Office in 1844.

It has been said that the feud between the Prince and his father ran upon lines similar to those which had existed in the previous reign. George II. had not cared to bring Frederick to England: he only decided to summon him—and that quickly enough—when it was reported that he was bent upon a secret marriage with the Princess of Prussia.

* Lord Shelburne says that Pelham sent it to Lyttelton with a polite message and an explanation. Fitzmaurice's *Life*.

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The King had, no doubt, brought this act of indiscipline upon himself to some extent by withholding from his son due sympathy and affection ; but he may be pardoned if he was indignant. Far worse was the next enterprise. The redoubtable Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, cordially hated the Court. She knew that the Prince was in debt and out of temper ; she therefore tempted him with the offer of her granddaughter, Lady Diana Spencer, with a dowry of 100,000*l.*, as a certain means of enraging his parents. The Prince accepted the proposal, and a secret marriage was prepared. There was no Royal Marriage Act in existence,* and it would have been valid ; but rumour of it reached Walpole's ears and the project was thwarted. The Duchess could only console herself by bequeathing handsome legacies to Pitt for his spirited defiance of the King and his ministers. Then came the quarrel over money. George II. as Prince of Wales had enjoyed a fixed income of 100,000*l.* He made no effort to secure this provision for his son ; he preferred to keep all the money that could be got in his own hands. He began by allowing Frederick 24,000*l.* a year ; after his marriage this was increased to 50,000*l.*, but still there was no security. Presently the King learnt with dismay that the Prince's affairs were to be brought up in Parliament. It appears that of his friends, Carteret and Pulteney were opposed to this extreme course, Chesterfield, Lyttelton, and Pitt urged it. Walpole saw the necessity of stopping the movement, and gained from the King a grudging consent to the offer of terms, including, as a compromise, the settlement on the Prince of 50,000*l.* a year. The Prince stiffly replied that the matter was no longer in his

* Until 1772.

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hands, and Walpole incurred the King's added displeasure for subjecting him to a rebuff. The debate took place, and the Prince's party were defeated by 234 to 204 votes. It is said that the division only cost the King 900*l.*: one member was paid 500*l.*, and another 400*l.*, for their votes; but it was explained that they had been promised these rewards at the end of the Session, and this was only a forestalling of payment. One of the King's excuses for not giving his son a more ample allowance, or approving his claim upon Parliament, was that whilst he himself was Prince of Wales there had been no Queen Consort. Now there was not only a Queen at Court, but there was a considerable Royal Family to provide for. Apart from his unhappy prejudice against Frederick, he appears to have regarded him as a spendthrift; his own habits we know were niggardly. During the collapse of Government in 1745 the King, according to Chesterfield, 'was very indolent, saying that it signified nothing, as his son, for whom he did not care a louse, was to succeed him, and would live long enough to ruin us all; so that there was no Government at all.'

In some of his grievances Frederick, perhaps, had reason on his side; but in the great scandal of the baby's birth he put himself entirely in the wrong. His father's precedent for turning such an occasion to discord had been this: when his second son, George, was born in 1717, George II. had desired his uncle, the Duke of York, to be godfather: George I. had insisted on the Duke of Newcastle. The father of the child understood that Newcastle was to attend as proxy for the Duke of York, and when he found that he stood there on his own account he attacked him with great violence. 'You are a

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rascal,' he shouted, 'but I shall find you.' What this phrase meant is open to doubt. Presumably his anger overcame his mastery of the English tongue, and he wished to imply that he would be quits with him yet. Some of those present thought he had said 'I will fight you,' and there was a scare of a duel. This was unfounded; but the indignity put upon the King's nominee was too serious to be overlooked. The offender was banished. Leicester House became the centre of opposition to the Court, although a formal and false reconciliation between father and son was eventually arranged by Stanhope and Walpole. Frederick's case was worse. The Princess was expecting her confinement. She and her husband were living at Hampton Court, where they occupied their own apartments, living nominally with the Royal Family but appearing only at the dinner-table, reluctant and estranged. The Princess at this time showed no marked capacity for revolt, and was rather a passive instrument in her husband's hands. Towards her he was never unkind, with the very great exception of his conduct at this crisis. He did, indeed, introduce his beloved Lady Alexandra Hamilton into his wife's service; but that was according to precedent and the custom of the age, with which he considered himself bound to comply. He did, also, say on one occasion that 'he would never make the ridiculous figure his father had done in letting his wife govern him or meddle with business which no woman was fit for'; but this may be put down to a gust of rage against his parents, and, upon the whole, the Princess may be said to have been a contented and devoted wife.

But she was to be sorely tried. The Prince made up his mind that she should not be confined at Hampton Court, if

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only because that was his father's wish. One day, believing the moment to be imminent, he drove her up to London; but it was a false alarm, and they hastened back without being detected. On July 31st, 1737, the Prince and Princess dined with the King and Queen as usual. When they had retired, unmistakable signs of labour appeared. The Prince, without hesitation, hurried the sufferer into a carriage and started at a gallop for St. James's. The cruelty of the act is manifest, and the description of the journey cannot be read without disgust. He had not even made any preparations. There was neither midwife, nor doctor, nor any of the ordinary appliances for such an occasion. She was actually put to bed between two tablecloths; and so a royal princess was ushered into the world.* News was at once dispatched to Hampton Court. The Queen was roused in the middle of her sleep and prepared to hasten to her daughter-in-law's rooms. Great was her amazement to learn that the event had taken place at St. James's. Thither, however, she made her way as quickly as horses could take her. The Prince received her with a stolid defiance, as though nothing unusual had happened; but his mother was thoroughly disgusted. '*Le bon Dieu vous bénisse, pauvre petite créature!*' she muttered when she saw the infant. '*Vous voilà arrivée dans un désagréable monde.*'

In spite of Frederick's assumed composure he felt that he had done something serious, and he proceeded to write dutiful letters to the King. But towards the Queen his animosity was implacable. Perhaps he believed her to be the cause of his troubles. Perhaps the question of Regency rankled. At all events, he went out of his way to insult

* Augusta; married Duke of Brunswick Wolfenbüttel,

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and annoy her. When she paid a second visit to St. James's his manner was deliberately insolent; yet in conducting her to her carriage, as custom required, he went down on his knees in the mud and kissed her hand dutifully, for the benefit of the crowd.* This cunning and unscrupulous pantomime aggravated his offence; and as a final affront he refrained from using the word 'Majesty' in any of the letters which he had occasion to address to Caroline.

His punishment was inevitable. Like his father, he was ordered to leave the royal palace. He retired at once to Lord Albemarle's house as a temporary refuge. He then formed his own establishments at Kew and Norfolk House, St. James's, whence he moved presently to Leicester House, and the rivalry of the preceding reign was repeated. This form of opposition was not limited to affairs of State. Before the exodus, family differences had been indulged and displayed with childish petulance. Princess Anne had professed herself an enthusiastic admirer of Handel; the Prince at once condemned him. The King and Queen supported their daughter; Frederick lost no time in forming a musical circle at another opera-house. Apparently the Prince patronised a lighter and more popular type of composition, for we are told that their Majesties 'sat freezing constantly at the empty Haymarket opera, whilst the Prince with all the chief of the nobility went as constantly to that of Lincoln's Inn Fields.' It must be remembered that behind this there was no honest enthusiasm. To most of the family music was a matter of utter indifference; it was only a pretext for showing jealousy and

* Lord Shelburne attributes this act of hypocrisy to the Princess, and on some other occasion. Fitzmaurice's *Life*, i. 65.

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resentment. And it was in keeping with this spirit that the King of England and his heir continued to regulate their private lives. As regards the Queen, it is easy to believe that the episode of the flitting from Hampton Court, and the subsequent contumacy of the Prince, tended to inflame her indignation. Within a few months she lay dying, and he was not allowed to visit her. It has been alleged that she would have received him gladly, but was over-ruled by the King. It is certain that the Prince endeavoured to obtain permission, and equally clear that the King opposed him: 'I always hated the rascal,' he said on this occasion; 'but now I hate him worse than ever.' Chesterfield, at all events, believed in the Queen's obduracy, for he wrote of her as one who 'unforgiving, unforgiven dies.'

It is no perversion of history to take an indulgent view of Frederick's character. He had been carelessly brought up, and subjected at an impressionable age to the flattery of courtiers and the lures of dissipation, without any affectionate protection. His father's unreasoning antipathy was sufficient by itself to distort the purpose of his life. Repelled, embittered, and estranged, he surrendered to the worse instincts of his nature instead of being helped to foster those that were better. More than this; whatever he did was interpreted to his disadvantage. On one occasion he displayed considerable gallantry in helping to put out a fire; and he was at once accused of courting popularity at his father's expense. Again, he had arranged a large dinner party at a time when his father was expected home from Hanover. It was known that the royal yacht had encountered rough weather, and at the moment grave anxiety was felt for the King's safety. Notwithstanding

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this, the Prince gave his dinner and was savagely abused for heartlessness and want of duty. But it was fairly urged in his excuse that there was no certain evidence that anything worse than delay had befallen the King, and that if the dinner had been abandoned, the effect could only have been to aggravate the existing alarm.

The Prince had certainly a less material mind than his father, and it may be taken as a sign of grace that he wrote verses to his bride. They were very bad, but the spirit that animated them was excellent. One specimen couplet will suffice :

'Tis not that lovely range of teeth so white
As new-shorn sheep, equal and fair.

He was goaded into rebellion : constant irritation and a sense of injustice worked their demoralising effect on a temperament not incapable of better things. Frederick left no good report behind him, whether he would have been more fortunate with his son we cannot tell : in 1751 he died. He was not more than forty-four years old, and death was due to a blow from a cricket-ball. Walpole says tennis—‘a blow received three years ago.’ Fox wrote to Sir Charles Hanbury Williams that the injury was ‘of long standing, due to blow or fall.’ Another letter gives it a baser name—‘hurt done him by a fall at trap ball, full two years ago at Clifden.’ One prefers the theory of cricket, which is the most familiar. It is not improbable : cricket was in fashion, and there is no reason to doubt that the Prince played it during his residence at Cliveden. ‘Lord Sandwich had drawn a great concourse of young men of fashion to Huntingdon races,’ we read, ‘and then carried them to Woburn to cricket matches made there for the entertain-

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ment of the Duke.' And Horace Walpole writes from Strawberry Hill: 'Lord John Sackville predeceased me here and instituted certain games called cricketalia which have been celebrated this very evening in honour of him in a neighbouring meadow.'

Whatever was the cause, the result was an internal malady which proved fatal, and Frederick was not destined to be King. The evil things which had been spoken of him were of course covered at once by an outburst of panegyric; but the common feeling was very likely expressed in the familiar lines which imply no enmity, and suggest that people upon the whole were inclined to be sorry for him.

Here lies Fred
Who was alive and is dead ;
Had it been his father
I had much rather ;
Had it been his brother,
Still better than another ;
Had it been his sister,
No one would have missed her ;
Had it been the whole generation,
Still better for the nation.
But since it is only Fred,
Who was alive and is dead,
There's no more to be said.

Let us now pay a slight and superficial attention to the London in which all these things happened, and take some notice of the tone and form of its Society. When George I. arrived in his new capital he found a population of about 700,000—less than one-seventh of the present number, yet numerous enough to make a formidable host and give substance to public opinion. The accession of the House

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of Hanover may be described as one of the lost dramatic moments in history. The Stuart cause had powerful allies at Court and plenty of adherents in the counties. The new King had no claim whatever on the loyalty or attachment of his subjects. Every instinct of sentiment favoured the exiled family. Anne was a woman of simple understanding influenced by her heart, not her head. Her happiness had been marred rather than secured by the strength of her private affections. She was not more than fifty, but sufficiently advanced in years to look back on life; and she was undoubtedly troubled with the reflection that she owed her throne to the downfall of a kind father and the exclusion of a brother to whom her warm heart instinctively went forth. Little persuasion was needed to win from her a declaration in favour of James. Chesterfield afterwards declared his conviction that if she had lived three months longer, the religion and liberties of the country would have been in imminent danger. Apart from the avowed friends of the Stuarts, many men of influence were known to be coquetting with their Court in France; many more were suspected. The crisis was at hand. Oxford had been dismissed. Bolingbroke had, as he thought, his hand upon the tiller. Bolingbroke may be conveniently described as the prototype of two remarkable men, though superior to both. Like Loughborough his ambition was unlimited and entirely free from bonds of scruple or unselfishness: like Brougham he had a restless and versatile genius, which compelled him to feverish activity in every department of life. He would certainly have brought back the Stuarts, if he had been satisfied that they were on the winning side: he put their supporters into high office, Mar in Scotland, Ormond at his

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own right hand. The Queen was dying: the Council met. There is no doubt that if the moment had seemed auspicious, a resolution in favour of James could have been carried. Of greatest weight on the side of Hanover was the Duke of Shrewsbury: but Bolingbroke might have been more than a match for him. Then came the spoiling of all calculations: into the chamber marched the Dukes of Somerset and Argyle. They had not been summoned, said they, doubtless through inadvertence; but they felt it their duty to lend their assistance to such anxious deliberations. Bolingbroke knew at once that he was checkmated; he consented with feigned alacrity to their proposal that Shrewsbury should be recommended to their Sovereign for the office of Lord High Treasurer; it has been suggested that with politic submission he hastened to make the proposal himself. Be that as it may, Shrewsbury received the wand from the dying Queen, and a few days later Bolingbroke wrote: 'The Earl of Oxford was removed on Tuesday; the Queen died on Sunday. What a world is this, and how does fortune banter us!'

The moment had passed: the conspirators had done nothing. Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, the most resolute of all Jacobites, he who eight years later was to be convicted of treasonable conspiracy and sent off to die in exile, boldly proposed to Bolingbroke that they should proclaim King James at Charing Cross: he himself would lead the procession in full episcopal panoply. Bolingbroke was not in favour of forlorn hopes, either as leader or follower, and he shook his head. The Bishop had nothing to do but lament over an opportunity lost through lack of spirit and organization. Thackeray, with ample measure of poetic

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licence, has drawn the same moral in *Esmond*: ‘Some few officers and members of Parliament had been invited overnight to breakfast at the “King’s Arms,” at Kensington; and they had called for their bill and gone home.’

Apart from sentimental attachment there was no formidable Jacobite party in the streets. The Roman Catholic religion was feared and hated. The Stuarts represented, to minds capable of thinking at all, tyranny and tumult. Under Anne the times had been prosperous, if not tranquil: upon the whole men would let things take their appointed course and have the Protestant stranger, of whom it has been scornfully said

The lout
Whom Whigs now call an English King
Threw German oaths about.

Thus it came to pass that George I. was proclaimed King of England, if not without a dissenting voice, at all events without an opposing arm.

But many years were to pass before the Hanoverian kings could afford to ignore the menace of those whom they called Pretenders—princes whose pretensions aimed at the throne to which they were legitimate heirs, and who might well have called the new occupants usurpers. In 1715 came the first of the two futile risings. It was completely frustrated; but the spirit was not destroyed. Two years later Walpole wrote to Stanhope: ‘The spirit of the Jacobites and Tories is at the same time revived beyond measure.’ In 1718, the Spaniards, with whom we were at war, furnished a little expedition of five ships to invade Scotland: three perished by the way: the other two landed two or three Scottish noblemen and as many hundreds of

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Spanish soldiers. A few Highlanders joined them; but the attempt was incapable of effect, and the band was quickly dispersed by the King's troops. In 1725, Walpole was in fear of a Jacobite invasion supported by Russia, 'for as I fear there will be no difficulty in fitting out a fleet, but in procuring men,' he wrote; 'this difficulty will increase if 'tis known that the fleet is designed for the Baltic, so great an aversion have all the sailors for that service.' Next year Atterbury was writing a memorandum to prove that Walpole, anticipating his own dismissal whenever George II. should become King, was opening negotiations with the Jacobites, and Pulteney was bringing the same accusation against both Walpole and Townshend.

George II. succeeded to the throne without any active protest, and Hervey believed the Jacobite faith to be obsolete: 'their attachment to the person of the Pretender is entirely dissolved,' he wrote. But it was smouldering still. During the trial of Atterbury in 1723 the Jacobite peers had shown a vitality that was not likely to be already extinct, and nearly thirty years later the strength of the following was urged in the House of Commons as a reason for not reducing the army. In 1733, after the excise riots at Oxford, the Rev. Mr. Meadowcroft, of Merton College, wrote, 'I am sorry to see a return of that foul malignant spirit that I once resisted almost to blood;' * and at the same time Walpole was endeavouring to curb the desire of the King and Queen to take part in Continental wars by threatening them with 'the shadow of the Pretender,' and warning the King that his

* It is fair to add that another observer declared that no Jacobite sympathies were exhibited, and that this instance proved the emptiness of alarming rumours.

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crown would be fought for on English ground. In 1736, Walpole, writing to his brother about the riotous demonstrations against the employment of Irish labourers at 'Spittlefields,' said, 'I think without flattering ourselves, this favourable inference may be drawn, that the industry of the Jacobites was not able to improve this truly Irish incident into a more general confusion.' And in the same year Chauvelin, minister for foreign affairs in France, inadvertently gave Lord Waldegrave a letter from James to his agent, urging French support to another effort, adding a guarantee of neutrality on the part of Austria. Walpole took this news calmly; he deprecated any 'agony of alarm' caused by the discovery; he professed to look upon the Pretender as an 'occasional evil that can do no harm of himself' and apt to be used as a tool by our enemies. Thus he wrote to his brother: 'I am of opinion that during the late war between the Emperor and France, the Imperial Court, in the great warmth and height of the resentment, for being what they call'd abandon'd by England, had transactions, for a little while at least, with the pretender, not so much with an actual design of restoring him, as to make use of him to intimidate us.' Daniel Pulteney used to say that the Pretender would never subdue us, but his name would always serve as an excuse for foreign powers to attack us. The Jacobite party in England he dismissed as 'an unorganized lump of inert matter.'

The year 1745 saw the last organized effort of the Jacobites. A forgotten figure in history is the young Pretender's brother Henry, the Cardinal. He lead a life

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not free from calamity, but he seems to have had an amiable nature and generous principles. He made no attempt to claim his throne, but never formally repudiated his title, and to-day he is commemorated in St. Peter's as Henry IX. of England. In 1752, Horace Walpole says, 'died Sir John Cotton, the last Jacobite of any sensible activity'; yet in the following year Lord Ravensworth thought it necessary to attack the Bishop of Gloucester, Stone, and Murray, the tutors and governors appointed for the care of the future George III., on the ground that they were once avowed Jacobites; and the matter was treated as one of serious public importance.

It may be said then that for forty years after the arrival of George I. the cause of the Stuarts remained a source of anxiety to the new dynasty, and although it never had sufficiently good management, and never gathered force enough to shake the throne, yet it was always a lurking danger. The first two Georges were in the position of Members of Parliament who hold 'safe' seats; they were never in imminent danger of being turned out, yet they were assailable, and the possibility could not be ignored.

Neither of these sovereigns can be said to have done anything to raise the standard of intellect or morals. In an age when much licence was permitted, they made no secret of their own indulgence; but if they were content with a base code they were free from the refined depravity of Charles II., and it was left to George IV. to be a drunkard. Their tastes were coarse. One of the grievances of George I. was that English oysters were insipid in contrast to those of Hanover. This difficulty was overcome by

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keeping them until their first freshness had worn off: then with an ample supply of seasoned oysters, plenty of German wine, his pipe, and the company of his mistresses, the King had for the moment no further weakness to satisfy.

George II. was certainly no worse than his father. In one respect, indeed, he started at an advantage. George I. had a wife locked up at Ahlden, the object of his hatred and resentment. George II. had a wife by his side whom he was shrewd enough to admire, and fortunate enough to have for a guide, without knowing it. To taste and learning he made no pretence. We have had an instance of his obtuseness with regard to pictures. We know that he cared nothing for music, and only professed to admire Handel for the purpose of annoying his son. All writers to him were fools and puppies. His Court did not by any means become German in appearance. When the Prince of Wales's bride arrived in 1736, she knew no English; it was taken for granted that German was the language in use at Court, and she found nobody who could speak German except the Hanoverians. The King and Queen made a practice of speaking French, and so little had their native language been adopted that Chesterfield was able to boast that his son was almost the only Englishman who could speak any German. English genius and talent were ignored, not supplanted. The fashion set at Court was duly followed. Mr. Lecky says of the later period of George II.: 'The intellectual tone was wholly wanting in society in England. Horace Walpole, who reflected very faithfully the fashionable spirit of his time, always speaks of literature as something hardly becoming a gentleman,

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and of such men as Johnson and Smollett as if they were utterly contemptible.'

George II. began to reign in an interval between great writers and great painters. Congreve, Steele, Prior, Addison, Defoe, were all dead or soon to die. Sterne, Smollett, Fielding, Johnson, Gray, and Goldsmith were not yet full-grown or established. Swift and Pope died in 1744 and 1745 respectively. Kneller had died in 1723; Reynolds was born in the same year, Gainsborough four years later. Hogarth alone can be regarded as a connecting link between the last generation and the next. The stars of art and literature which had illuminated the firmament from Charles I. to Anne were gone out. Cards supplied the favourite recreation of fine people. What Cowper wrote later might have been applied with equal fitness to this period: 'It is in vain, indeed, to look for conversation where we might expect to find it in greatest perfection, among persons of fashion; there it is almost annihilated by universal card-playing: insomuch that I have heard it given as a reason why it is impossible for our present writers to succeed in the dialogue of genteel comedy, that our people of quality scarce ever meet but to game. All their discourse turns upon the odd trick and the four of honours; and it is no less a maxim with the votaries of whist than with those of Bacchus, that talking spoils company.'* Manners, indeed, were gross; it was a matter of course for men of the highest position to get drunk together, and it was not scandalous if they were seen tipsy in society. There was looseness of speech amounting to libertinism;

* Godolphin in 1708 had said he liked gambling because 'it delivered him from the necessity of talking.'

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women and maidens heard and said things which would astonish the most callous of our generation. The example of the great was faithfully reproduced amongst the humbler classes. In 1724, said Bishop Benson, 'those accursed spirituous liquors which, to the shame of our Government, are so easily to be had, and in such quantities drunk, destroy the very race of our people themselves.' Hogarth's picture of the 'March of the Guards to Finchley' has been admired by all of us with a sense of disgust.

But if a gentleman might be drunk and foul-mouthed, he must be careful of his appearance. There was larger scope for taste in attire than we enjoy, and there was more temptation to be a fop. One Member of Parliament, Lord Sidney Beauclerk, brought the Government to the verge of defeat by refusing to obey an urgent summons to go and vote on the ground that he had on his morning undress. He yielded so far as to consent to wait in the house which Lord Walpole, as Auditor of the Exchequer, occupied within the precincts of Parliament, 'where two other Members were (very ill) but the lock and keyhole were so stuffed with sand and dirt that the door could not be opened. The sick gentlemen could not go round, and his lordship, not having a black coat on, thought it would be very indecent to come into the house any other way.* Yet this is not altogether peculiar to the age. The present writer can remember a Member of Parliament in grave distress; a similar emergency had

* Sir R. Walpole to the Duke of Devonshire. He also says that 'Sir William Gordon was brought in like a corpse having a white cloth round his head.'

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compelled him to hasten to the House and appear, for the first time, without a frock-coat.

Walpole and Hervey show us that dilettantism was in fashion. A fine gentleman did well to dabble in art and letters so long as the distinction between his elegance and the arduous work of the professional was clearly understood. Wit, to be sure, is for all time, and the men of George II.'s reign were as witty as they could manage to be; but we need not think that there was any dazzling display in a generation where George Selwyn shone. When the King spoke of him as that rascal George, he observed, 'Rascal, ah, yes! the hereditary title of the Georges.' When he was asked whether Princess Anne was to be allowed a guard, he said, 'Now and then one, I suppose.' These Horace Walpole has recorded as specimens of his best. His biographer, Mr. Jesse, gives a selection of specimen gems. When one has to choose as the best his observation, upon seeing the Postmaster-General losing money at cards, that His Majesty's mail was being robbed, it is easy to guess the nature of the rest. When Reynolds contemplated standing for Parliament, Selwyn approved of the project because he was 'the ablest man he knew on a canvass.' That was perhaps his highest flight of wit.

Worse comes with these anecdotes of the joker. Here is 'an excessive good story' as told by Walpole. Selwyn went to see Lord Lovat buried: when the head was joined to the mutilated body, he intoned in the voice of the Lord Chancellor, 'My Lord Lovat, you may rise.' When he was blamed for going to see the head cut off, his answer was, 'I am sure I have made amends, for I went.

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to see it sewn on again.' He had a passion for dead bodies, and according to a story related by Lady Holland, he actually contrived to hide under the bed of Queen Caroline in order to enjoy an opportunity of inspecting the corpse.* Indeed, one cannot think that it was a very witty generation when we find Horace Walpole writing thus: 'My Lady Townshend said an admirable thing the other day. He [Bath] was complaining of much pain in his side. 'Oh,' said she, 'that can't be. You have no side.'

If music received little attention, the drama was not in great glory. Cibber and Booth had had their day: Garrick was not to appear until 1742. The 'Beggar's Opera,' the play best known to us by name, was produced in 1727; but the Government did not relish the satire of the stage, and the sequel, 'Polly,' was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain. Censorship had always existed, nominally in the hands of the Lord Chamberlain, but in practice at the discretion of a subordinate officer known as the Master of the Revels. Soon after the accession of George II. the stage became licentious: no supervision was exercised, and new houses sprang into existence. An effort was made to check this spirit by the arrest of an actor who performed at the Haymarket without a licence. He was prosecuted under the Vagrants Act, but on the plea that he was a householder and had a vote for the election of a Member of Parliament, he secured his acquittal and was loudly cheered by the public.

Drury Lane had been in existence since 1662; Covent Garden was opened in 1732; there were other theatres

* *Journal of Elizabeth Lady Holland*, ii. 66.

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in Goodman's Fields and elsewhere. In 1735, Sir John Barnard brought a bill into Parliament to limit their number. He complained that there were no fewer than six, and that they corrupted youth, encouraged vice and debauchery, and greatly prejudiced trade. Walpole proposed to insert a clause giving additional power to the Lord Chamberlain. Barnard objected to entrusting an individual with arbitrary power, and the measure was lost. Then the parts were reversed: Walpole, on the pretext of amending the Act of Anne, 'for reducing the laws relating to rogues, vagabonds, sturdy beggars, and vagrants,' in so far as it related to 'the common players of interludes,' introduced a strong measure of censorship and control. To this Barnard proposed and carried an amendment which provided that no person should be authorised to act except within the liberties of the City of Westminster and where the King should reside. This bill was speedily passed into law: its principal opponent in the Lords was Chesterfield, whose protest remains one of his most celebrated memorials. But a golden age was dawning; it was not to come to full development until the following reign, but Garrick supplies a connecting link.

Walpole records that on 'March 7, 1751, the House adjourned to attend at Drury Lane, where *Othello* was acted by a Mr. Delaval and his family.' Another proposal for adjournment, although outside our period, must be recorded. In 1809 the business of Parliament was interrupted by the news that the theatre was on fire. Sheridan's connection with it was notorious, and a motion for adjournment was made. This Sheridan opposed:

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‘Whatever might be the extent of his private calamity,’ he said, ‘he hoped it would not interfere with the public business of the country.’ He went at once, and sitting in the Piazza Coffee-house, drank his wine quietly and watched the blaze. Somebody expressed amazement at the calmness with which he contemplated his calamity. ‘A man may surely be allowed to take a glass of wine by his own fireside,’ said he. It is worth remarking that as far back as 1776, when he was negotiating for the purchase of a part interest in the theatre, he wrote to one whose assistance he had sought: ‘The security will be very clear, but as there is some danger of risk, as in the case of fire, I think four per cent. uncommonly reasonable.’

The Press was struggling into existence: the newsletter and the literary essay were yielding ground slowly to the coming tide of journalism. ‘Loved he did the liberty of the Press, yet thought the abuse of the Daily Papers ought to be noticed’: such is the curious report of Lord Temple’s observations in the House of Lords in 1753. Everybody remembers Macaulay’s description of the journalists of the eighteenth century: ‘Half the inhabitants of Grub Street garrets paid their milk scores and got their shirts out of pawn by abusing Pitt. His German wars, his subsidies, his pension, his wife’s peerage, were shin of beef and gin, blankets and baskets of small coal to the starving poetasters of the Fleet’; although it is fair to add that this has been discounted by later writers. It is fine rhetoric, but may mean no more than that journalism has always been a precarious profession. Thackeray declares that the Grub Street idea was an invention of Pope’s. He points out that amongst those who relied upon writing for

a livelihood, Addison became a Secretary of State ; Steele, a Commissioner ; Prior, an Ambassador ; Swift, nearly a Bishop.*

Parliamentary reporting was still forbidden and only accomplished by subterfuge. If an avowed and undisguised report of a debate made its appearance, it was at once burned by the public hangman. The most solid ground of objection was that reports were not accurate and that they made members responsible for what they had never said. Walpole declared that to misreport a speaker was a worse offence than forging franks, for which people had lately suffered punishment. Less tenable was the proposition that in no case ought the public to know what had been said in Parliament : this was apt to get members into trouble with their constituents and was a grave violation of the rights of free speech.

It may be observed that, apart from the great and avowed power of the mistresses, and the still greater and unavowed influence of the Queen, the women of the day appear to have taken little or no part in Parliamentary management. Chesterfield, for example, made a marriage of expediency, but his wife was never permitted and never aspired to interfere with his public life. It may be taken as a sign of the times, that we only read of women in connection with love affairs, legitimate or illicit. Statecraft, political intrigue, and rivalries of men and parties were not their business. Consequently, men's dinner-parties were in accordance with custom. They needed not nor heeded the encouragement and aid of wives or friends' wives, and this, no doubt, kept alive the intemperate habits in which,

* *Four Georges.*

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as we may hear again, most of the public men indulged. Secretary Craggs once wrote to Lord Stanhope: 'There dined yesterday at Lord Sunderland's, the Dukes of Devonshire and Newcastle, Lord Carlisle, Lord Townshend, Lord Lumley, the Speaker, Walpole and I, and we got, some very drunk, and others very merry. Lord Falmouth, whom the publick nicknamed Lord Foulmouth. . . . ' So much for London; and of England outside London, George probably knew but little; still less did he know or care about the rest of Great Britain.

Scotland was not too well-affected. Mr. Lecky says that the country was reconciled to the British alliance by the recognition of the popular Church and the destruction of feudal rights. But the spirit exhibited during the Porteous riots did not indicate a tranquil and ungrudged obedience to the Government. Earlier than that, in 1725, the imposition of the Malt Tax had been resented as an injustice, and it was necessary to send the Earl of Ilay on a special mission to restore peace and order. 'I think we have once more got Scotland and Ireland quiet, if we take care to keep them so,' Walpole had written then. His son, Horace, was telling another tale before the reign was over: 'The forty-five,' as it was called, had disturbed the prospects of permanent quiet. One of the sequels of this rebellion was the prohibition of the kilt. It is not difficult to imagine the wrath which this insult to a national habit would arouse. It was, in fact, inoperative. Duncan of Knockdunder, in the *Heart of Midlothian*, probably spoke for all Scotland when he said that 'the law is put twa-three years old yet and is ower young to hae come our length.' In 1752, a Bill was passed through Parliament 'to purchase,'

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as Horace Walpole puts it, 'at the rate of about an hundred thousand pounds, the estates in Scotland forfeited by the late Rebellion, and which the King was to cede to the public in order to have colonies settled on them, especially of Foreign Protestants. The necessity of the purchase was pretended to arise from mortgages on them.' This measure was not likely to be popular amongst the clans. Mortgages suddenly sprung up in all directions; therefore some North-countrymen must have found it good for the pocket, even if pride must needs be put away there, together with the grant. But in Parliament the provisions were hotly disputed. Scotland was being rewarded for having rebelled. No retribution, said Mr. Vyner (meaning, doubtless, restitution, as we use the word) had been made to any parts of England that had suffered by the rebels, though ten thousand pounds had been given to Glasgow alone, to compensate their damages. In the Lords there was keen criticism; Lord Tweeddale, for instance, 'spoke with passion, but as nobody expected any great lights from him, so he disappointed nobody.' But the Bill passed and the session ended. When the King prorogued Parliament, the Speaker, according to Horace Walpole, 'in his speech to him, launched out in invectives against the management in Scotland.' George was in a hurry to be off to Hanover, whither he departed five days later. This perhaps accounts for his putting up with such plain speaking.

But if Scotland had to complain of no flagrant and unprovoked acts of oppression, it was otherwise with Ireland. Mr. Lecky puts the case at its worst. According to him, there was a long record of grievances to be avenged,

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and these rankled sorely. Not only had the religion of the people been suppressed; the cattle trade, the trade in wool, and in linen to some extent, together with the herring-fishing industry had been destroyed; not only had Roman Catholic children been forced into Protestant schools and there neglected, whilst Protestant landlords equally neglected the estates from which they drew their incomes; 'slave-dealers,' we are told, 'were let loose upon the land, and many hundreds of boys and of marriageable girls, guilty of no offence whatever, were torn away from their country, shipped to Barbadoes, and sold as slaves to the planters.'* When, later on, the Irish Parliament had petitioned to be admitted into the Union (1707) it was commercial jealousy that had repelled her advances.

In 1725 came the unfortunate patent under which William Wood was privileged to supply Ireland with copper coin. 'It was acknowledged,' says Mr. Lecky, 'that the intrinsic value of the Irish copper would be considerably below that of the English coinage'; although it is right to observe that Sir Isaac Newton reported that the Irish coins exceeded the English in metal value. However that may be, Swift was there to write the Drapier letters, and Ireland had one more injustice to score up against her oppressors. So the course was run until the Irish Parliament was in open rebellion against the King's authority (1754). It must not be forgotten that Mr. Froude paints the picture differently: according to him an unruly and aggressive population of Catholics had brought upon themselves all the troubles they endured, and had to undergo nothing but a just retribution. 'The common sense of all

* *England in the Eighteenth Century*, ii. 173.

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nations declares,' says he, 'that those who risk the game of insurrection shall pay the penalty of failure;* and, again, 'The worst means of governing the Irish is to give them their own way.†' Horace Walpole, as a contemporary critic, was of opinion that the 'Protestants . . . were too certain on any change of Government to meet with no quarter from the professors of a religion, by whose plunder they were enriched, not to be inflexibly attached to the prince on the throne' (1752).

To hold the balance between the opposing factions would require much time and profound attention. Such an effort would distract us from King George, and turn our minds into wide and philosophical research. Indeed, what has been already said is rather ragged and discursive. More to the point is it to fasten upon one definite practice whereby the treatment of Ireland during the reign of George II. may be gauged. For many years the viceroyalty of Ireland was regarded by the Government, not as an office to be filled by the man best qualified to govern the country, but as a refuge for a minister in distress. In 1716, when Sunderland and Stanhope had succeeded in driving Townshend from office, he was induced unwillingly to become Lord-Lieutenant as a consolation. Carteret was treated in the same manner in 1724. In 1744 Chesterfield was relegated to Dublin, but so little importance was attached to his duties that they were no impediment to a considerable sojourn in Holland, whither he was dispatched as Ambassador. He returned eventually, and made this the most successful and memorable period of his public career. So diligent was he, indeed, that he drew a remon-

* *English in Ireland*, i. 133.

† *Ib.* 153.

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strance from the Duke of Newcastle: 'Though your Irish subjects will detain you as long as they can,' he wrote, 'I should hope you would think near seven months' royalty sufficient.' Against which it is worth while setting the principles of a later Viceroy, for the sake of contrast. In 1819 Lord Talbot wrote: 'Should the country be as quiet as it is now, I shall apply for leave next year.' When Chesterfield left, it was to become Secretary of State in place of Harrington, who had incurred the King's displeasure by refusing to support Granville and Bath (Carteret and Pulteney) in their endeavours to carry on the Government. Again, to represent the King in Ireland was not deemed too great an honour for the minister who had lost his favour in England, and Harrington was allowed to change places with his successor in office.

Still worse than the trifling with the Castle were the raids on the Exchequer. One instance will suffice. When the army in the Netherlands was to be reduced in 1748, the Duke of Cumberland did his utmost to resist; he urged with all his fervour that the regiments might be preserved and made a charge on Ireland, 'which,' he added, 'my Lord Harrington seemed to think they would not be much averse to.' What evidence the Lord-Lieutenant could produce to prove this complacency we cannot tell, but either it was accepted as convincing, or it was considered a matter of no importance, for the upkeep of five regiments was accordingly laid to Ireland's charge. Against this we may set one instance of George's sense of justice. Lord Keeper Henley (1757), in bargaining over ministerial arrangements, stipulated for a pension on the Irish Establishment, and the King peremptorily refused.

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It was not until George III. was on the throne that Chatham insisted on a Viceroy staying in Ireland during a crisis and superseding the Lords Justices in their authority.

The authority of the Cabinet during this period is an interesting matter for study. J. R. Green* gives to Sunderland, the minister of Charles II. and James II., the credit of inventing the system of party government, and transferring patronage from the Crown to Parliament. He says that so far back as the reign of William, ministers had 'ceased in all but name to be the king's ministers.' It is difficult to reconcile this with what we read of the cabinets of George II.

It must be remembered that until the Hanoverian succession the sovereign had been used to preside over the meetings of the Council. George I. knew no English, and wisely refrained from the mummery of assisting at deliberations in an unknown tongue. But it is beyond question that both he and his son chose and dismissed their ministers at will, and filled vacant offices as they pleased.

What, then, was the Cabinet, and what was the position of Ministers? Macaulay has explained that the Cabinet system evolved itself without definite order out of the primitive habit of kings to surround themselves with counsellors. As late as 1711 there was a curious debate in the House of Lords on the meaning of the term Cabinet Council. Lord Scarsdale preferred the word Ministers, as being better known. Lord Cowper declared they were both 'terms of uncertain signification.' Lord Poulet declared that there was no difference, because all those who were in the Cabinet Council were ministers. Lord Ilay objected

Short History, 698.

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that neither expression was recognised in law, therefore 'they ought to use a plain English word.' Lord Peterborough introduced a further difficulty by comparing the Cabinet Council with the Privy Council. 'The Privy Councillors,' said he, 'were such as were thought to know everything and knew nothing; and those of the Cabinet Council thought nobody knew anything but themselves.'

In 1753 the Lord Chancellor declared that 'the term Cabinet Council, said to be borrowed from France, was no novelty . . . it had been called by our ancestors sometimes the Cabinet for foreign affairs; sometimes the Cabinet for private.' In 1760 Horace Walpole wrote, 'There are but two new Cabinet Councillors named, the Duke of York and Lord Bute,' meaning, presumably, the Privy Council. Bute was to be a Cabinet Councillor; not so the Duke. We have already seen how the Dukes of Somerset and Argyle, on the ground of being Privy Councillors, marched into the meeting of Queen Anne's ministers when the sovereign lay dying. In fact, the constitution of the body is, as Lord Macaulay says, without the authority of form; and, if by no means void, it is of irregular growth. Most of its members take rank as Privy Councillors, not as Cabinet Ministers; and it was not until the reign of Edward VII. that the position of the Prime Minister was officially recognised.

The office of Prime Minister was viewed with grave suspicion. When Walpole fell, Sandys, in the course of his indictment, said: 'According to our Constitution we have no sole or prime minister; we ought always to have several prime ministers or officers of state; every such officer has his own proper department, and no officer ought to meddle

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in the affairs belonging to the department of another.' At the same time a protest was signed in the House of Lords to this effect: 'We are persuaded that a sole or even a first minister is an officer unknown to the law of Britain, inconsistent with the Constitution of this country, and destructive of liberty in any country whatever.' According to Sandys, Walpole was as bad as 'the most worthless favourites that have ever engrossed the ear of former sovereigns.' He had 'arrogated to himself a place of French extraction, that of sole minister.' Lord Winchelsea long before had railed against the usurpation of power by a sole minister.

Pitt, in 1754, declared that 'if we do not make this effort to recover our dignity, we shall sit here to register the edicts of one too powerful a subject' (Newcastle). He had attacked Carteret as an 'execrable sole minister' in 1743.

By 1746 the term Premier had come into common use in the correspondence of ministers. Walpole had created the office by his personal ascendancy, and henceforward there was always a recognised head of the administration; but Carteret was really the leader of the next Government, in spite of Lord Wilmington being titular head. Chatham was never nominal Prime Minister, nor was Charles James Fox afterwards: they were content to exert their controlling influence under the Dukes of Devonshire, Grafton, and Portland, and Lord Grenville. Mr. W. H. Wilkins, speaking of Townshend as Secretary of State, says 'he must henceforth be regarded as Prime Minister.' Coxe makes a clear statement of the recognised leadership: 'Mr. Pelham became Prime Minister by his appointment to the post of First Lord of the Treasury.' The Duke of Grafton had no

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illusion as to his position. In 1767 he said, 'From my office feeling it is incumbent on me, since the state Lord Chatham has been in, to take the lead. . . .'* He had another illustrious colleague, who was really his master, in Shelburne. When Shelburne became Prime Minister in 1783 the Duke served under him, but he made this reservation: he was determined 'not to abet Shelburne views of becoming Prime Minister, and never to consider him but as holding the principle office in the Cabinet.'† Lord North never allowed himself to be addressed as Prime Minister in private life, on the principle that no such office existed in the British Constitution.‡

For a long time the King continued to act as the head of the Government. He not only chose his prime minister, he filled the minor posts. In 1746 George II. announced his intention of making Sir John Barnard Chancellor of the Exchequer. In 1748 there was a general Cabinet intrigue. Chesterfield was forced to resign. Newcastle wanted to replace him with Lord Sandwich; the King appointed the Duke of Bedford. In 1749 there was further reshuffling; Pelham told the King that he could not carry on the government if Granville was to be forced on him, but hastened to add that he was 'far from interfering with any disposition his Majesty should think proper to make.' This was quite as the King desired. 'I have been forced to part with those I like. I will never be induced to take into my service those who are disagreeable to me,' had been his utmost concession. So, in 1763, Grenville wrote to Burke, 'I flatter myself you will believe I am too sensible of the

* Fitzmaurice: *Life of Shelburne*, ii. 68.

† *Ib.* iii. 343.

‡ Sir G. Trevelyan: *Early History of C. J. Fox*, 229.

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King's goodness to me to pretend to put any negative upon those whom he shall approve.' Again, in 1765, Pitt refused overtures to draw him into the Government, on the ground that the offer should have come from the King, not Rockingham. Shelburne said it was natural for the King to stand up for the prerogative of the Crown, and insist upon his right to appoint his own servants. Even George IV., after Canning's death, offered the Exchequer to Sturges Bourne as the dead man's intimate friend. Having begun by hating Eldon, he proceeded to call him '*my* Chancellor.' He belonged to him, and not the Ministry, and he insisted on nominating Lyndhurst in his place, when Eldon retired.

Cabinets in those days were not necessarily homogeneous : not only were they composite ; they were often composed of discordant elements. In the days of Townshend and Stanhope, rivalries amongst ministers were comparable to the rivalry of a modern Government and Opposition. Years afterwards, when the fall of Walpole led to a general re-arrangement, Pelham could only find salvation in a coalition. 'Should we attempt a total change at this period,' said he, 'disorder and confusion must ensue.' Pulteney, at the same time, declared his policy to be a change of ministers, and with it a change of measures. According to Coxe, there was at the time 'no person whose ascendancy in the closet, influence in Parliament, and pre-eminence of talents, enabled him to take a decided lead in the Cabinet.' Carteret lived on strange terms with his colleagues. When he was abroad with the King in 1743, Walpole offered this advice to Pelham : 'Give the great man abroad as good as he brings. . . . Whig it with all opponents that will parley, but 'ware Tory'; whilst the

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Chancellor was writing to Newcastle to complain of 'our taciturn friend,' who kept secret the negotiations in which he was engaged. Lord Sandwich wrote to Pelham later, 'I dare say I can rely on your showing this letter to no person whatever, particularly to any of your brethren in the Administration.' Newcastle, in a letter to Harrington, is found saying: 'What I now write is in the utmost confidence, without the knowledge of any of my brethren.' Again, Harrington, the Lord Chancellor, and the Pelham brothers dine together, 'that we may consult amongst ourselves what is to be done, before we meet Lord Carteret in the evening.' In 1751 the Duke of Bedford left the Government, on the ground that the Duke of Newcastle and his section were manipulating the offices of State 'in order to promote their scheme of engrossing all power to themselves and their creatures.'

It will be noticed that the word 'brethren' is employed instead of colleagues. When Townshend and Walpole, who were brothers-in-law, shared the control of Government, it was not unnatural that they should be spoken of as the brother-ministers; but the term was given a general application. The Duke of Norfolk wrote to Stanhope of 'your brother Horace' (Walpole); and he speaks of 'my brother Carteret' and of 'my brethren.'

There are further signs that responsibility was neither distributed nor comprehended in accordance with modern principles. When the King went to Hanover in 1743, it was to the Lords Justices that he referred all inquiries as to his policy and intentions, not to the Cabinet;* and this is how Walpole regarded the gravest concerns of a Prime Minister:

* Coxe: *Pelham*, ii. 24.

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‘I do not pretend, sir,’ said he in the House of Commons, ‘to be a great master of foreign affairs.’ Again, with regard to the conduct of war: ‘As I am neither a general nor admiral, as I have nothing to do either with our Navy or Army, I am sure I am not answerable for the prosecution of [the campaign].’ We may set against this, however, the words of Pitt in 1740: ‘It is my opinion, however, that our time cannot be more usefully employed during a war than in examining how it has been conducted, and in settling the degree of confidence that may be reposed in those to whose care are entrusted our reputations, our fortunes, and our lives. When he was virtually Prime Minister he let it be known that he meant to “control the fleets” regardless of the First Lord of the Admiralty.’* Certainly a different conception of duty had arisen in the days of Canning when Sir Charles Bagot wrote of him to Lord Binning: ‘Let him consider that as Prime Minister—I mean as First Lord of the Treasury—he can still control foreign affairs.’ The office of Lord Treasurer had been abolished when George I. became King, and henceforward the First Lord of the Commission of Treasury was the titular Prime Minister.

Whilst the Cabinet system was gradually taking shape, the Opposition was becoming a recognised part of the procedure of Government. If Walpole may be regarded as the first Prime Minister, as we understand the term, the honour of being the first Leader of the Opposition must be given to William Pulteney. It was left to John Cam Hobhouse (Lord Broughton) early in the next century to carry matters further, and create the designation of his

* Von Ruville.

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Majesty's Opposition; but he found the institution so well regulated as to deserve it.

William Pulteney had a second cousin named Daniel, who played a lively part in politics. He was in office under Walpole, but hatred took the place of loyalty in his bosom, and, according to Speaker Onslow, it was he 'who first endeavoured to form this opposition into a system or regular method of proceeding; . . . he settled his kinsman, Mr. Poulteney* (afterwards Earl of Bath) in this Opposition, though they little agreed, or indeed conversed, with one another before' (1725). Modern historians have not adopted this theory. Mr. McCarthy says: 'The position taken by [William] Pulteney is chiefly interesting to us now in the fact that it opened a distinctly new chapter in English politics. Pulteney created the part of what has ever since been called the Leader of the Opposition.' Macaulay says that he became the greatest Leader of Opposition that had ever been seen. Such is the rôle which is generally assigned to him, and Daniel's share in the business is forgotten.

It is interesting to observe that we have Walpole's own estimate of the opposition with which he had to contend. 'You may cry up Pulteney, Pitt, Lyttelton, and others,' he said; 'but when I have answered Sir John Barnard and Lord Polwarth, I think I have concluded the debate.'

The Budgets of the day afford curious reading. In 1743, the year of Dettingen, the supply required was under 6,500,000*l*. The Navy and Army both cost about 2,500,000*l*. There were charges of between 200,000*l*. and 400,000*l*. for foreign subsidies; for Westminster Bridge,

* The name is spelt Pultney, Pulteney, Poultney, Poulteney, Pultnye.

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25,000*l.* ; for repairing the Churches of St. Peter and St. John, 8000*l.* ; for the marriage portion of the Princess of Denmark, 40,000*l.* To meet this, the Income fell short by 57,000*l.* Land Tax, at 4*s.* in the pound, brought in nearly 2,000,000*l.* ; the only other specified impost was the Malt Tax. Lottery subscriptions brought in 600,000*l.*, and 1,000,000*l.* was taken from the Sinking Fund. There was a Civil List of 800,000*l.*, and the interest on the National Debt raised the total expenditure to nearly ten millions. Apparently, the receipts from permanent taxes were sufficient to meet this, for it is recorded that Mr. Pelham was able to make provision ‘without imposing a single additional tax.’ Smollett, in his History, calls it ‘a sum almost incredible, considering how much the kingdom had been already drained of its treasure.’

In 1746, to take another example, the charge for the year had risen to nearly 9,500,000*l.* The Navy cost 3,800,000*l.*, the Army 2,300,000*l.* There were subsidies for Hessians, Hanoverians, horse and foot, and for the Queen of Hungary, King of Sardinia, and the Electors of Cologne, Mentz, and Bavaria. Westminster Bridge took 30,000*l.*, and an annual charge had appeared under the title of compensation for the loss of horned cattle, destroyed to check infectious disease, which now stood at 70,000*l.* The Income account shows the same items, but the Lottery subscriptions are now put at 1,000,000*l.* Whatever may be the virtue or viciousness of lotteries as a financial expedient, they were certainly turned to good account : out of the proceeds, payment was made for Westminster Bridge and for the nucleus of the British Museum. With the Civil List and the National Debt charge, the total expendi-

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ture for the year amounted to nearly thirteen millions, and additional revenue was derived from increased duties on houses and windows, and on coaches and carriages. This time Smollett seems to have been more cheerful. 'The nation, so far from being impoverished by its enormous expenses, both at home and abroad, seemed to possess inexhaustible wealth.' One can only wish that the financial problems of our day were capable of such easy adjustment.

Mr. Lecky tells us that the standing army, between the years 1717 and 1742, had averaged about 17,000. During the Seven Years' War large additions were required, and the Militia was put on a basis which stood firm until yesterday; but at first it was so unpopular that regular troops had to be employed in the provinces to force young men to enlist. Military establishments were still viewed with suspicion. It was no longer the tyranny of kings that was feared. According to the same authority, Cromwell's memory inspired apprehension, and Blackstone, in 1765, was urgent in requiring that soldiers should 'live intermixed with the people,' and that there should be no separate camps, no barracks, and no inland fortresses.

In 1751, Egmont urged reduction to 'just sufficient to guard against any sudden, unexpected invasion.' Mr. Thornton, we are told, argued against the necessity for any standing army, 'but his reasoning did not obtain the attention which it deserved.' Chatham himself had declared in his earlier days that we ought to have at home as few soldiers as possible: 'soldiers are a danger to liberty.' As late as 1827, Lord Lyttelton wrote to Sir Charles Bagot: 'There are constitutional men (but I am not among the number) who dread a standing army beyond a sergeant's guard at

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each palace.' Commands of regiments were held on the insecure tenure of political favour. For opposing Walpole's Excise scheme in 1733, Chesterfield, Stair, Montrose, Burlington, Marchmont, and Clinton were all turned out of office. Lord Cobham and the Duke of Bolton were, for the same offence, removed from their commands. The Government, for all their high-handed action, were harassed at times by reformers or faddists. In 1751, Sir John Cotton declared that the Grenadiers might still be kept to attend the King's person, but, for his part, he eagerly desired to break up the Guards and the regiment of Blues. Nor was the Little Navy Party missing; it was found in the Cabinet. In the same year there had been a motion to raise the number of seamen from 8000 to 10,000; Pitt had supported it, but it had been rejected. Then came a demand for a warship to be sent to Nova Scotia as a protection against the French. The Board of Trade supported this; but the Duke of Bedford, in explaining it to the King, said, 'It is a project of the same faction who have endeavoured to increase the Navy this year; I have desired your Majesty's servants to meet at my house on Wednesday; I believe they will not think it proper to come into the proposal.' 'No,' said the King, despite his warlike instincts; 'they are the most troublesome, impracticable fellows I ever met with; there is no carrying on the measures of Government with them.'

This leads us to a reflection which seems to deserve some pursuit. We speak and hear continually of the evil of our days: we are beset with perplexities and confronted by growing perils. Our predecessors never had to deal with such awful problems as our own; no generation

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ever had such reason as we have to be dismayed. It is worth while taking at random phrases and passages from history and comparing them with the words familiar to our own ears. We have already noticed one or two instances, and it will appear that there are few signs of our times for which we cannot find a match in those of George II.

To begin with matters of no serious importance: we have heard a good deal of the adjustment of Parliamentary business for the purpose of allowing Ministers to devote the end of the week to golf. In Walpole's time, a Saturday adjournment was introduced to enable him to go and hunt. We attach much importance to the political control of our newspapers. So did Walpole. Amongst others, he subsidised the *Corncutter's Journal*. We have heard the Tory party held up to scorn as the stupid party. Pelham had discovered that 'the Tories were not masters of calculation or proficient in the knowledge of languages.' We have heard of a Government sending a very contentious Bill up to the Lords in the secret hope that they would throw it out. In 1730 the Government passed a measure through the Commons to prevent any one holding an office of emolument, place, or trust, from sitting in Parliament. 'It was generally believed,' we read, 'that the Minister [Walpole] suffered the Pension Bill to pass the House of Commons because he knew that it would be thrown out by the Peers. Townshend . . . was unwilling that the odium of its rejection should be cast upon the House of Lords': which is precisely what happened, although the King wrote to Townshend, 'Our friends in the House of Commons ought to show the

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utmost dislike of it in order to justify the Lords in throwing it out.'

It is true that the Peers were treated with greater reverence than they are now. So important were they in their individual capacity that they were not entitled to leave the country without giving notice of their intention. The Duchess of Buckingham wrote to Walpole from Boulogne: 'I know there is the usual form, as I take it only to be esteemed, of any peers asking permission of the King to go out of the Kingdom but that ceremony, I thought, reached not to women.' Sir Charles Wager recognised the advantage of nobility so fully that, although his ambition was to be First Lord of the Admiralty, he admitted that 'it is necessary that the head should be a lord (not an Irish lord).' And Peers exercised an avowed influence at elections. 'The Duke of Devonshire has done gloriously in Derbyshire,' wrote the Duke of Newcastle in 1734. Indeed, it was because of this irresistible influence that the Sessional Order of the House of Commons was passed in 1801, which prohibited peers from interfering in elections.* Familiarity with peers upon platforms, and the sanctity of the ballot have, however, together fortified the spirit of the voter to such a degree that he may safely be regarded as peer-proof now.

In domestic matters, the servant trouble was as great, according to Mr. Lecky, as we find it. Queen Caroline complained to Hervey of the severe tax she suffered in the giving of tips at houses which she visited. The system was so general and so exacting, that soon after the middle

*This order was revoked in 1910.

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of the century there was an organized attempt to check it. The abuse was considered by grand juries, and the consequence was a rise in the rate of servants' wages. We have already seen that excessive drinking was a national weakness. Foreign labourers were said to be better off than ours, 'for it is well known that our people spend half their money in drink.'

Unemployment was already a grievous and a difficult problem. Early in the century Defoe had said, 'When I wanted a man for labouring work and offered nine shillings per week to strolling fellows at my door, they have frequently told me to my face that they could get more a-begging As they can live so well on the pretence of wanting work, they would be mad to have it and work in earnest.' The loss to this country caused by foreign investments was held up as an evil to be avoided: in defending the proposal for the naturalisation of Jews, Pelham argued that if they were forced to live abroad, they would draw away one or two millions in interest on funds which might otherwise be spent in this country.

In naval affairs, the two-power standard was already a recognised principle. Whatever Chatham may have thought about a large army at one time, he had no doubts about a big navy. He called it the standing army of England. This is what he said in 1771: 'The first great and acknowledged object of national defence in this country is to maintain such a superior naval force at home, that even the united fleets of France and Spain may never be masters of the Channel. If that should ever happen, what is there to hinder their landing in Ireland, or even upon our own coasts? When

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the defence of Great Britain or Ireland is in question, it is no longer a point of honour; it is not the security of foreign commerce or foreign possessions; we are to contend for the very being of the State. . . . We can no more command the disposition than the events of a war. Wherever we are attacked, there we must defend.'

Mr. Frederic Harrison says that 'his ideal was based on British commerce, navigation, and sea-power.' 'Our proper force is our Navy,' he said; 'the sea is our natural element.' The value of sea-power to England was indeed obvious to every one. Horace Walpole in discussing the hostile spirit of the King of Prussia, wrote: 'The great superiority of the navies of Great Britain over the baby fleet of Prussia, the only arms by which nations so separated can come to any discussion of interests, was too evident for that Prince to have dared to hazard his infant hopes on so unequal a contest.'

Nevertheless, military preparation was not then a virtue we possessed. In 1756, Lord Waldegrave had to complain that 'we first engaged in a war, and then began to prepare ourselves': to which Pitt added that 'the country was so unnerved that 20,000 men from France could shake it.'

In 1739 there was only 5000 arms in Ireland, of which 2000 were useless. The Board of Ordnance contracted for the delivery of 12,000 by September 1740. When the time came, only 300 were ready. At this moment a descent on Ireland was looked for; yet there was no warship at hand.

In connection with rifles, it is curious to read, in

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Parkman's admirable *Montcalm and Wolfe*, that during Braddock's disastrous engagement, 'officers and men who had stood all the afternoon under fire, declared afterwards that they could not be sure that they had seen a single Indian.' With the substitution of Boer for Indian, this might well be found in an account of some of the battles in South Africa in 1900.

The chances of invasion were a frequent and favourite topic of debate. One high authority laid it down that 'he who should say you have an invasion to fear would be laughed at almost as much as he that should say you meant to chase guarda costas with horse, foot, and dragoons.' Pitt, on the other hand, drew an alarming picture of a French invasion of London and the horrors which would follow. Horace Walpole wondered whether the next owner of Strawberry Hill was on board the Brest Fleet: 'I have apprehensions of living to see it granted de par le Roy. . . . In plain English, we are going to be invaded.' He took a very gloomy view of our prospects. To Conway, in 1745, he wrote: 'If it were not for that one slight inconvenience that I should probably be dead now, I should have liked much better to have lived in the last war than in this; I mean as to the pleasantness of writing letters. . . . It hurts one's dignity to be talking of English and French armies, at the first period of our history in which the tables are turned. After having learnt to spell out of the reigns of Edward III. and Henry V., and begun lipping with Agincourt and Cressy, one uses one's-self but awkwardly to the sounds of Tournay and Fontenoy. . . . We who formerly, you know, could, any one of us, beat three Frenchmen, are

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now so degenerated that three Frenchmen can evidently beat one Englishman.'

Chatham had no patience with language of this kind. Long afterwards he declared that 'any state is better than despair. Let us make one effort; and if we must fall, let us fall like men.'

Meanwhile, there were the familiar complaints of people who refused to be alarmed. *The Critic* belongs to a late period of the century, but the reproach of Mrs. Dangle to her husband will serve as an illustration: 'You hate to hear about your country; there are letters every day with Roman signatures, demonstrating the certainty of an invasion, and proving that the nation is certainly undone. But you never will read anything to entertain one.' To this may be added a postscript to a letter dealing with the critical state of the national credit: 'The opera is very fine and very full.'

In the region of politics we find curious resemblances to our own phrases and causes. In 1745, the campaign in Scotland was spoken of in Parliament as a 'kind of war.' In 1752, Walpole spoke of the door being 'not only shut, but barred and barricaded against future subsidies.' The use of identical, or almost identical words, by ministers of our own, has provoked considerable comment. The familiar phrase, 'blood and treasure,' was invented by Marlborough or Bolingbroke, and was used by Maria Theresa.

It is worth noticing, as we pass, that the Chairman of Committees was then said to be in the Money Chair; which brings us to the thorny question of Tariffs. In 1721 the King's Speech contained a bold pronouncement in

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favour of Free Trade: the produce of certain duties, it was said, would be found inconsiderable compared with the advantage which would accrue to the kingdom by their removal. Then, in reference to the supply of Naval Stores from the American Colonies, it was laid down that they would 'not only contribute to the riches, influence, and power of this nation, but, by employing our own colonies in this useful and advantageous service, divert them from setting up and carrying on manufactures which directly interfere with those of Great Britain,' which, if we mistake not, was one of the advantages foreshadowed in the original programme of Tariff Reform. Walpole was strongly in favour of encouraging trade with our colonies. 'It was obvious,' said he, 'that, since these commodities were necessary for the Navy, it was impolitic to be at the mercy of a foreign prince, especially as we might be supplied from our own plantations on easier terms, and in exchange for our own manufactures.' We have seen that Pitt attached great importance to our foreign trade, but he relied upon naval supremacy rather than fiscal theories. In 1739 he dwelt on the danger of a combination of Powers to challenge our sea-power and cripple our possessions abroad: 'When your trade is at stake, it is your last entrenchment,' he cried. 'You must defend it or perish.' The King's Speech of 1724 contained another paragraph, which is reproduced to-day, recommending 'the consideration of such laws as may be wanting . . . for the employment of the poor.'

Certainly the licence allowed itself by Opposition to attack Government in time of stress is no wider now than it was then. In 1730 Bolingbroke was making as much

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mischief as possible. 'Under his auspices the Opposition brought forward many questions calculated to harass Government. . . . To obtain evidence in support of these points he sent his Secretary, Brinsden, to inspect the state of the works of Dunkirk.' France was under an obligation not to fortify Dunkirk : it was believed that this was being done notwithstanding. Relations between the two countries were in a perilously strained condition, and our Government were inclined, for the sake of peace, to ignore the matter. The Opposition, eager to damage them, sought for that 'stream of facts' to be turned to their discredit of which we heard something at the beginning of the war in South Africa. The anti-English zeal of Fox later on, during our wars with the Americans and the French, is a stain upon his reputation, towards which posterity is strangely indulgent.

Meanwhile Pulteney, the great leader of Opposition, was as uncompromising as he could be. Reviewing the negotiations for peace in 1731, he condemned 'all treaties that have been made since the late King's accession, except one made this last year by the Board of Trade with some Indian kings, which he thought must be a good one, and was liked by the Indians, for they had entertained the commissioners with a song and dance.'

To return to our starting-point. Here are a few confessions of despair which may help to put heart into those who detect symptoms of national decay now such as have never been suspected before. In 1730, Poyntz was so certain that the Government in power was going to ruin the country that he wrote: 'I shall determine to go to one of our plantations in the West Indies rather than

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live in England under such an aspect of affairs. . . . If the cause of liberty must sink, I will look out for England somewhere else.' In 1734, Bubb Dodington 'blessed God that he was a single man, not married, and had no family to look after or be concerned for, which he looks upon in our present circumstances as a very great happiness.' In 1741 he cheered up a little, and declared, 'I do verily believe the country may, by great pains and industry, and by slow degrees, become once more restored to its former grandeur and reputation'; but this was said more for the purpose of glorifying the Opposition than anything else. He complained that members of Parliament would devote themselves to fox-hunting and gardening 'indifference having always kept our people in the country till the very day before the meeting of Parliament.' In 1735, Horace Walpole (the elder) wrote: 'I see nothing but black clouds gathering on all sides; I don't see a ray of light to disperse them, and I never was so puzzled in my life.' Bolingbroke, in spite of his insidious assaults on the Government, felt unhappy at the way things were going. 'A people cannot be saved against their will,' he wrote in 1739. 'I look abroad with curiosity and impatience to learn what becomes of the wealth, honour, and liberty of a country I must always love in this decisive moment.' Ten years later he could see 'scarcely anything round him but ruin and despair.' Stair wrote to Pulteney, 'For a good while past I have seen destruction coming to this nation with very wide strides.' In the *Caricature History of the Georges*, by Thomas Wright, we read, in connection with Admiral Byng, 'The people who governed the country were so much addicted to French luxuries and French vices that

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they would willingly have allowed our enemies to get possession of Minorca, and blink at their encroachment in America, rather than have a war which would cut off the supplies that peace with France administered to their vanities.' Perhaps it was due to this love of ease and amusement that, in the thick of the war of 1759, volunteers for active service were nowhere to be found, although voluntary contributions of money were plentiful.* Alderman Heathcote wrote to Lord Marchmont, in September 1745: 'Your Lordship will do me the justice to believe that it is with the utmost concern that I have observed a remarkable change in the dispositions of the people within these two years; for numbers of them . . . are grown absolutely cold and indifferent . . . so that unless some speedy stop be put to . . . that parliamentary prostitution which has destroyed our armies, our fleet, and our constitution, I greatly fear the event.' Browne, in his *Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*, complained, 'Love of our country is no longer felt . . . public spirit exists not.' The leading quality of the age, according to him, was 'a vain, luxurious, and selfish effeminacy,' which was rapidly corroding all the elements of the national strength. 'England,' another pessimist wrote, 'is for the first comer. . . . The people may look on and cry, Fight, dog! fight, bear! if they do no worse. . . . The French are not come—God be thanked! But had 5000 landed in any part of this island a week ago, I verily believe the entire conquest of it would not have cost them a battle.' In a debate on the conversion of debt in 1749, a member of the Opposition declared that the balance of trade in our

* Von Ruville: *Chatham*.

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favour was progressively declining ; we should at length be deprived of our stock of precious metals, and finally reduced to utter ruin. Chesterfield was a confirmed pessimist. In 1752 he wrote : ' I foresee that before the end of this century the trade of both king and priest will not be half so good a one as it has been.' And in 1757 : ' We are no longer a nation ; I never yet saw so dreadful a prospect. . . . Whoever is in and whoever is out, I am sure we are undone both at home and abroad.'

After the death of George II. the times grew even gloomier. In 1782 a French observer spoke of ' England surcharged with taxes, torn by the spirit of party, corrupted by thirst for money, and threatened with inevitable ruin.' In the same year an Englishman wrote : ' Consols this time two years ago were 61 and 61½, now 54 and 55. To go on paying the interest only for any length of time (without thinking of capital) of the Public Debt is as impossible as for me to lift up St. Paul's.' And next year the Emperor Joseph II. wrote : ' England is fallen wholly and for ever.' If there be any who would care to observe how this language has been maintained unbroken to the present hour, they need only turn to the first volume of memoirs that lies conveniently near.

So much for George II. and his times. We will now look at some of his servants. But before we leave the King we may make one observation. He was by no means a cipher. He had high spirit and great energy. He was certainly master in his own house, and he flattered himself that he was actually the ruler of his kingdom. But although he was something of an egoist and autocrat

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at home, he was not conceited or obstinate enough to insist upon introducing that spirit into all affairs of State. He was neither excellent nor contemptible, but his mediocrity was redeemed by the fact that he was served by the greatest peace minister and the greatest war minister that ever lived in England. To have had his domestic policy managed by Walpole and his war policy afterwards conducted by the elder Pitt was a rare combination of luck and profit that rendered his reign, if not always glorious, at all events memorable and full of interest. He was enabled to take his place in history unashamed.

CARTERET :
THE FOREIGN MINISTER

CARTERET: THE FOREIGN MINISTER

THE biographer* of Lord Carteret opens his work with these words: 'The almost complete oblivion which covers the career of Lord Carteret is one of the curiosities of English political and historical literature'; and he goes on to say that 'the present is the first attempt which has been made to give any complete and connected account of his career.'

It is no exaggeration to say that most people of ordinary information would be at a loss to give any account of Carteret: to many his name is unknown. Yet he played a very prominent part in politics for forty years. He was never nominal Prime Minister, but under Wilmington in 1742, he was, as Macaulay says, 'chief minister—indeed, sole minister.' In 1746 he was charged with the formation of a government, in alliance with Pulteney; but the attempt was futile. From 1751 until his death in 1763 he was Lord President, and twice during this period Newcastle, in moments of despondency, begged him to assume the responsibilities of leadership. His energy or his ambition had by this time waned, and

* *Life of Lord Carteret*, by Archibald Ballantyne, 1887.

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he refused. Whatever critical estimate of his career may be formed, it is undeniable that in knowledge of foreign affairs he eclipsed all his colleagues, and Carlyle, who adopted him as a favourite, declared that he was 'a lord of some real brilliancy, and perhaps still weightier metal'; and again that he was 'thought by some to be, with the one exception of Lord Chatham, the wisest Foreign Secretary we ever had.'* Another critic of our time places him lower. Lord Beaconsfield† thought that he had 'succeeded in maintaining a considerable though secondary position in public life.' Yet he was of opinion that Shelburne, Carteret's son-in-law, 'the ablest and most accomplished minister of the eighteenth century,' was influenced in his efforts to destroy the supremacy of the Whig oligarchy by 'the example and traditionary precepts of his eminent father-in-law.' This criticism appears to be unstudied and hazardous, and the implied compliment to Carteret is vitiated by the absence of any evidence that Shelburne ever enjoyed the benefit of his instruction. Indeed, the relationship was only posthumous: Shelburne married Lady Sophia two years after her father's death.

Be that as it may, one can produce innumerable proofs of the exalted place that Carteret occupied in the judgment of his contemporaries. Immersed as he was in political conflict, at a time when rivalry and bitterness amongst colleagues were as much to be expected as they are now between opposing parties, he incurred his full share of hatred and disparagement. This was inevitable; but that such attacks as he endured were the outcome

* *Frederick the Great.*

† *Sybil.*

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of passing complications, and not the result of settled conviction, one illustration will serve to prove. After Walpole's fall in 1742, Pitt turned the batteries of his invective upon Carteret. He was the 'execrable sole minister who had ruined the British nation and seemed to have drunk the potion described in poet fiction, which made men forget their country.' His foreign policy drew from his assailant the contemptuous title of 'the Hanover troop minister.' He was a 'desperate rhodomontading minister.' Yet, after he was dead, Lord Chatham confessed in the House of Lords, 'I feel a pride in declaring that to the patronage, to the friendship, and the instruction of this great man I owe whatever I am.' Lord Stair told Lord Marchmont that 'he had lately occasions to see Lord Carteret's degree of knowledge, and that he was as ignorant as the Duke of Newcastle, *c'étoit tout dire*, although he spoke better'; but it must be remembered that Stair, in command of the allied troops on the Continent in 1742, had persuaded himself that to Carteret was due the political lagging which hampered military operations, and he bore a grudge accordingly. Ignorant he certainly was not. Horace Walpole called him 'master of all modern politics,' and Horace had cause to dislike him for having been a thorn in the flesh of Sir Robert. Chesterfield called him 'master of all modern languages,' and Chesterfield was a judge of culture or he was nothing. Smollett, who was not in politics, said that when Carteret had left the Government, 'there has been no minister in this nation worth the meal that whitened his periwig.' Swift, in Dublin, paid him a tribute of admiration which could have had

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no motive but sincerity. Lord Macaulay knew all this and much more; and here is his conclusion: 'No public man had such profound and extensive learning. He was familiar with the ancient writers his knowledge of modern languages was prodigious. . . . He spoke and wrote French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German, even Swedish. . . . He had read all that the Universities of Saxony and Holland had produced on the most intricate questions of public law. . . . Carteret was far from being a pedant. . . . In council, in debate, in society, he was all life and energy. His measures were strong, prompt, and daring, his oratory animated and glowing.' Of such a man it is not surprising that he should write that 'the colleagues of Walpole, after his retreat, soon found themselves compelled to submit to the ascendancy of one of their new allies.' Mr. Lecky, baffled by the emptiness of research, is content with the observation that, of all the leading Englishmen of the eighteenth century, Carteret is perhaps the one of whose real merits it is most difficult to speak with confidence. There exists a very solid memorial of his public work in thirty-four volumes of unpublished manuscripts in the British Museum. To a profound historical student these are, of course, invaluable; but they add little to the knowledge already available through the pages of well-known books; and much of the earlier papers refer to diplomatic movements in the north of Europe, which have long ceased to interest any but the most erudite and inquisitive scholars.

Carteret was related to half the peerage, and more than once, in the House of Lords, he spoke of his concern for the dignity and welfare of his order. Amongst

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his sons-in-law were Lords Dysart, Weymouth, Shelburne, and Tweeddale, yet, so far as is known, there is no vestige of his personality to be traced in the libraries of Longleat, Bowood, or Yester. Some letters will be produced presently, by the obliging favour of one of Lady Dysart's descendants; but the fact remains that a very active and very remarkable man is to us little more than a phantom, impossible to neglect in contemplating the history of the time, but incapable of being endowed with the vivid interest of daily life and domestic intercourse.

The Carterets were of Norman origin, and may boast of having 'come over with the Conqueror.' Their lands slipped from them whilst they dwelt in England, and the family connection was transferred to Jersey. In later days Sir George Carteret, a staunch adherent of King Charles, went over to uphold the Royalist cause in the island. Here he boldly proclaimed Charles II. in 1649, and had the honour of entertaining his sovereign in the days of wandering and adversity. He came to London at the Restoration, and was appointed Treasurer of the Navy. It is alleged, probably with truth, that Charles intended to confer on him a peerage, but that death prevented this reward of loyalty. Sir George's son, Philip, was drowned fighting against the Dutch in 1672. Ten years later his son, at the age of fifteen, received the honour which the King had been dilatory in bestowing, and became Lord Carteret. He married Grace Granville, She was directly descended from Sir Richard Grenville, of *Revenge* fame, whose grandson, Sir Bevil Granville, fell fighting for King Charles with a patent of the Earldom of Bath in his pocket. Sir Bevil's son, Sir John, was as

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ardent a loyalist as any man, and at the Restoration he became Earl of Bath, Viscount Lansdowne, and Baron Granville. It was his daughter Grace that married the first Lord Carteret. When he died in 1695, she was created Viscountess Carteret and Countess Granville in her own right. Their son was John, Lord Carteret, the subject of these pages: he was born in 1690. On his mother's death in 1744 he became Earl Granville: he died in 1763.

These titles are confusing. The Granville title expired with Carteret's son: the present earldom is of a separate creation.* The Earldom of Bath became extinct, but Carteret's daughter married Viscount Weymouth, and the subsequent Marquisate of Bath restored the connection between the title and the family. This again must be kept distinct from the Earldom of Bath, which was enjoyed for a short time by William Pulteney, and was revived in favour of his great-niece, who died without issue in 1808. Another daughter of Carteret's married Lord Shelburne, who became Marquis of Lansdowne, the title and the family in this case also renewing their connection. Carteret was sent to Westminster and to Christ Church. Six months before he was of age he married Frances, daughter of Sir Robert Worsley, and granddaughter of the first Viscount Weymouth. Next year he took his seat in the House of Lords (1711).

It might have been supposed that one who had inherited such a volume of tradition binding him to the House of Stuart would have inclined towards the Jacobite and Tory Party. Carteret, however, declared himself a

* A younger son of the second Viscount Weymouth was created Lord Carteret: but the title became extinct.

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Whig, and professed unqualified allegiance to the Protestant Succession and the House of Hanover. During the rising of 1715 he was active in the Western counties in preserving the peace for King George, and he was appointed a Lord of the Bedchamber.

He entered public life at the moment when Sunderland and Stanhope on the one side, and Townshend and Walpole on the other, were struggling for supremacy in the Whig Party. Carteret threw in his lot with the former, and his choice was fortunate. The brothers-in-law retired beaten, and Carteret shared in the division of the spoils of victory. Stanhope sent him as Ambassador to Sweden in 1719: Sunderland made him a Secretary of State in 1721.

The story of his Swedish Mission need not be told at length. It would not be easy to revive its historical interest now, although it was important enough then. The point to be noted here is that the ambassador was an untried man of nine-and-twenty, and that he succeeded in the face of many and formidable impediments. His object was to make peace between Sweden and her many rivals and antagonists—Prussia, Russia, and Denmark, besides his own master, in his double character of King of England and Elector of Hanover. In the latter case there was the delicate and pressing matter of the cession of Bremen and Verden. The Czar was menacing and moving. Carteret boldly pledged the succour of the British fleet, and ordered Sir John Norris up to Stockholm, securing in exchange the terms he wanted in the Hanover treaty. But he had to encounter vacillation and subterfuge amongst the Swedish negotia-

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tors, and procrastination on the part of the British Admiral. He was further embarrassed by diplomatic overtures which were being conducted in Hanover for the settlement of Prussia's demands: these, for which he was not responsible, he had to force upon the acceptance of the Swedes. But Norris came, and he was able to conclude his bargain so far as matters had gone.

For the rest he had to match himself with the jealousy and intrigues of foreign ministers who had their own ends to gain, and to keep unimpaired his hold upon the Swedish Court and Government. 'I would give a good sum of money out of my own pocket to be well out of these circumstances,' he wrote to Whitworth in Berlin. 'I don't care for bold strokes, and yet I have lived by nothing else here.' He was not afraid of striking boldly: he was playing against time. The King of Prussia would not sign his treaty, and delay would have destroyed Carteret's comprehensive scheme. He therefore signed on his own responsibility, staking his chances upon Frederick's consent within six months. This the King did not withhold, subject to such careful details as that the waggons and horses which brought the money guaranteed by Prussia should be paid for by Sweden. Thus peace was secured as far as Sweden, Hanover, and Prussia were concerned.

Russia flatly refused to negotiate through the British Ambassador: there remained Denmark. In this case again the difficulties appeared to be insuperable, but Carteret persevered. Anticipating the diplomacy of Lord Beaconsfield at Berlin in 1878, he proclaimed his intention of departing at once and leaving events to run any course they pleased. This threat alarmed the Danes. Finally he

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repeated his policy of signing a treaty and trusting to the King of Denmark to confirm it. Again he succeeded. A visit to the Danish Court gave him an opportunity of exercising his personal influence, and at the end of seventeen months he found himself at liberty to go home. Coxe, in his *Life of Walpole*, sums up his achievements thus: 'Carteret succeeded in his negotiations and is applauded, though not without regret, by Swedish historians for the consummate address with which he prevailed on Sweden to conclude a separate peace with Hanover, which was followed by a subsidiary alliance with England under the mediation and guarantee of France.' This work had been so fully appreciated that he had been offered the Embassy at Paris, and he had been nominated to accompany Stanhope to the Congress at Cambrai; but he was to exchange diplomacy for politics.

Carteret came home to find London convulsed by the collapse of the South Sea fraud. Stanhope, broken down by shame and rage, died suddenly. Walpole rose upon the ruins to the elevation where he was to sit in power for twenty years. With him came Townshend, not yet estranged. This involved the fall of Sunderland, Stanhope's ally; but his disgrace was not absolute, and it was at his instigation that the King, who was his own government-maker, appointed Carteret Secretary of State for the Southern Department.

Carteret was now thirty-one. According to our views, the acquisition of a young colleague of such undoubted ability should have gladdened the heart of a Prime Minister, but it is by no means certain that Walpole wanted strong men of independent spirit for his colleagues. In one respect

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he had some ground for jealousy. No doubt the King recognised in him the right man to govern the country at a time of financial confusion, but from personal sympathy they were mutually excluded by ignorance of any common tongue in which to converse. The accomplished Carteret could accommodate his master with agreeable intercourse in the language of the beloved land of his birth. Moreover, the affairs of Europe were still embroiled: nobody knew more of Continental politics than Carteret, and nobody could be more helpful to a monarch with a mind to govern. Spain was at enmity with France because the Infanta, who had sallied forth as the destined bride of Louis XV., had been unceremoniously returned as unsatisfactory. England was out of favour because her sympathies were supposed to be French, and because Gibraltar still remained in British hands. The Emperor and the King of Spain had conflicting interests and claims to wrangle over, but they suddenly came to terms privately, whilst the Powers were seeking general conditions of adjustment at Cambrai. England, France, and Prussia at once entered into a treaty at Hanover, to which Sweden, Denmark, and Holland subsequently became parties. The King's German policy was always regarded with suspicion in England, and Walpole might perhaps have turned this jealousy to the prejudice of Carteret, but he found a less heroic strategy convenient.

Carteret's trouble was not to arise out of great issues. He was caught tripping in a domestic affair, and there is something ridiculous in the trivial cause of his defeat. The Countess of Darlington (Kilmansegge) had a niece, daughter of her sister, Countess Platen. This lady's con-

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nection with the House of Hanover makes it obvious that the daughter was of blood relation to King George: whether this was the reason or not, he undoubtedly took an eager interest in the lady's affairs. Perhaps he was inspired by nothing more than a desire to please his own favourite. However that may be, he encouraged a scheme under which the niece was to marry the Count de St. Florentin, son of the Marquis de la Vrillière, on condition that a dukedom should be bestowed upon the bridegroom's family. The King, Townshend, and Carteret were in Hanover. Walpole was in London. In Paris the British Ambassador was Sir Luke Schaub, a Swiss, once Stanhope's secretary, in whom Carteret put his trust. The nominee of Sunderland and the secretary of Stanhope must at once have provoked the antagonism of Walpole and Townshend, and the negotiations followed a course which might have been obvious from the first. Schaub reported that all was going well, and Carteret believed him. Dubois, the minister, died; then the Regent, Duke of Orleans; and still no dukedom was forthcoming. The Duke of Bourbon became Regent, and Walpole thought it time to stop the farce. He therefore sent his brother Horace, the diplomatist, with a vague commission to see how things were getting on in Paris, and with careful instructions not to interfere with the accredited Ambassador. His true object was to ruin Schaub. It was not done in a moment, but he held the winning cards. After a little play it was discovered that Schaub was beaten. The dukedom was definitely refused, Schaub's recall was forced upon the King, and Carteret was obliged to confess that his hostile colleagues had outmanœuvred him. His continuance in

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office was impossible, and he ceased to be Secretary of State (1724).

It has been said that Ireland was the customary asylum for distressed statesmen, and thither Carteret repaired. How far his disgrace was merited must, of course, be a matter of opinion. His biographer not unnaturally represents him as the victim of an intrigue on the part of jealous colleagues, and it is true that Horace Walpole once wrote : ' Sir Robert Walpole loved power so much that he would not endure a rival.' Lord Morley,* on the contrary, convicts him of having caballed with the Tory leaders against his own colleagues after Sunderland's death in 1722, and he quotes the assertion of the sagacious Queen that ' she had long known Bolingbroke and Carteret to be two as worthless men of parts as any in this country, and long known them too, both by experience and report, to be two of the greatest liars and knaves in any country.'

Mr. Justin McCarthy accuses Carteret of having intrigued against Walpole whilst he was his colleague, and there can be no doubt that Sir Robert was encouraged at the time to believe it. From Hanover he received this report from Townshend : ' I am sorry the false and vain accounts our friend thinks proper to send over of his superior interest at this place should make the least impression on any one. I had the satisfaction to find the King entirely agree with me in opinion, to the no small mortification of my antagonist. There is direct confession of Carteret's dealing with the Tories throughout all last session, which they are very explicit in. I have had the good fortune to bring it about in a quiet way without our colleague being consulted.'

* *Walpole.*

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Whatever may be the truth of these allegations, it may safely be asserted that Carteret staked his position on the trumpety affair of the French dukedom, and that the penalty of failure was retirement in Dublin Castle. Having arrived there, he appears to have halted between two opinions: should he be on Walpole's side or against him? According to Mr. McCarthy he lost no time in conspiring with Roxburgh and others to defeat Walpole's Malt Duty in Scotland; but he undoubtedly felt that there was wisdom in trying to establish friendly relations. To Richard Edgecumbe he wrote: 'If that friendship can be obtained I shall think myself happy, and be for ever faithful to it; if not, you will bear me witness that I endeavoured it.' Upon which Walpole made this cynical observation to Townshend: 'We shall prevent him from entering into any engagement with Roxburgh, Pulteney, &c. . . . I say nothing of his sincerity, so as to answer for it, but we know him enough to watch him and be on our guard.' Even in the case of Wood's coinage, of which we have now to speak, Carteret went so far as to confide to St. John Brodrick that it was the luckiest thing that could have occurred in favour of his party in the Cabinet, even at a time when he was enforcing the policy enjoined by Walpole. In fact, the frailty of the ties which were supposed to hold governments together in loyalty, and the interminable exchanges of alliance that joined and estranged colleagues, make it difficult indeed to present a clear and simple outline of party distinctions.

Carteret arrived in Dublin to find the question of Wood's coinage demanding instant attention. The Duchess of Kendal had had a voice in the matter; Sunderland,

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Carteret's friend, had been confronted with the problem, but had died without solving it. Ireland was short of copper coin, and had no mint. How was the want to be supplied? Mr. Wood, a Wolverhampton ironfounder, purchased the advocacy, so it was said, of the Duchess of Kendal, and secured a patent for the coinage of copper money to the extent of 108,000*l*. Ireland was ablaze. The coins were bad; the supply excessive; the principle wrong; the injustice flagrant; the consequences to be apprehended, ruinous. The Duke of Grafton, then Lord-Lieutenant, warned Walpole of the coming strife; but Walpole had to assert the authority of the Crown. A Committee of the Privy Council was appointed to inquire into the justice of the Irish grievance, and it obtained a report from Sir Isaac Newton, Master of the Mint, to the effect that the terms of the Patent had been duly observed, that the coin was good, but that there was too much of it, and that the supply should be restricted to 40,000*l*.

Grafton despaired: Walpole and Townshend rated him soundly. The Lords Justices, even Lord Chancellor Midleton, joined in the chorus of protest; the Ministers were implacable. Grafton left Dublin in April 1724, and Carteret took his place. St. John Brodrick wrote to his father, the Lord Chancellor,* that the new Viceroy 'seems resolved to be perfectly passive in this affair.' But Carteret had no mind to be passive. He perceived that behind the clamour against the coinage there were murmurings against English authority. He decided that the use of Wood's copper could never be enforced, but he was ready to carry out the

* The Lord Chancellor always wrote to his second son, to whom he had given his own name, Alan, 'dear namesake.'

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spirit of his instructions to the best of his power. Whether his ingenuity and courage under any circumstances could have overcome so vigorous an opposition may well be doubted; but that opposition became invincible when it was fortified by the letters from the Drapier. Three had appeared before Carteret came to Dublin. The fourth, which quickly followed his arrival, was so plain an incentive to rebellion that Carteret decided to strike at once. The author professed to be a humble draper addressing his fellow-tradesmen on the prospects of trade, and considering how their interests would be affected. Every one knew that they came from Swift: not only did they exactly suit the conditions of the moment; they have secured a lasting place in literature.

Now Swift professed and doubtless entertained a warm regard for Carteret. Both Lady Carteret and her mother were amongst those to whom he wrote letters of eloquent adulation. In his letters he paid compliments to Carteret: he had the temerity to attend his levee, and engage him in a battle of wits, in which the Viceroy was able to exhibit his readiness of retort and his familiarity with the classics, and from which both combatants probably derived a good deal of secret satisfaction. But Carteret was not to be beguiled. He decided to prosecute the author of the letters. He was warned that there would be a tumult: 'As long as I have the honour to be Chief Governor here,' said he, 'the peace of the kingdom shall be kept.' But his prosecution failed. Swift could not be drawn into the open. The printer was arrested: no jury could be induced to find a true bill. Swift bore no malice: he frankly admitted that Carteret's hand had been forced. But the hand was powerless to grasp. Treason itself would cease to be

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treason if it were preached in the name of protest against the coinage. So Carteret told his Government, and so the Government had reluctantly to confess. The struggle was long, and inglorious certainly on the part of the Government. It was not until September 1725 that Carteret was authorised to inform the Irish Parliament that the Patent had been cancelled. Wood received compensation—at the expense of Ireland; but Ireland was accustomed to be charged and fined and taxed, and was glad to be rid of the nuisance upon any terms. Perhaps the one good thing that came of it all was the jest of Archbishop King. It was moved that the Sovereign be thanked for his goodness in yielding to the wishes of his Irish subjects. The Archbishop, with a mixture of malice and wit, proposed to insert the significant word, wisdom, and it was only by Carteret's adroit intervention that his Majesty was spared a public affront. The story of Carteret's rule in Ireland contains little more than the record of rivalries and jealousies which his diplomatic talents enabled him to compose with so much skill that he finally secured the good word of Archbishop Boulter, who hated the Irish, without losing the friendship of Swift, who hated the English. 'Why did they send you here?' was the worst the Dean had to say: 'You are not fit for this place; let them send us back our boobies.' He never treated his Excellency with the usual forms of deference. His conversation was familiar; his approach not unduly humble. One day, he was kept waiting in an ante-room, which annoyed him. He took a pencil and wrote:

My very good Lord, 'tis a very hard task
For a man to wait here who has nothing to ask.

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The Viceroy's reply was as prompt as it was good-natured :

My very good Dean, there are few who come here,
But have something to ask or something to fear.

Carteret, however, was not really safe from the lash of the Dean's malice. Here is an extract from the Memoirs : 'He had maintained a war of intrigue in the interior of the Cabinet against Walpole, and his brother-in-law, Townshend ; and by caballing with the Brodricks and furnishing, it was said, the private history of the mode in which Wood's Patent was obtained, he greatly encouraged the discontent in Ireland, trusting that all the odium would be imputed to Walpole.'

Archbishop King complained in 1725 that since Carteret had been in office he had 'disposed of 20,000*l.* a year in benefices and employments connected with the Church to strangers, and not 500*l.* to natives of Ireland.' Yet the Viceroy at the end of his term, when he was asked how he had managed to govern the country, attributed his success to having 'pleased Dr. Swift.'* No matter whether it were policy or principle that inspired him, it is clear that he was not indifferent to the claims and aspirations of the Irish people.

Carteret left Dublin in 1730. Whilst he had been there in partial retirement, the affairs of Europe had passed from one stage of complication to another. Early in 1727, Spain had renewed hostilities upon the pretext of recovering Gibraltar. Her ally for the moment was Austria. It was

* Mr. Lecky accepts this statement as not untrue. He elsewhere admits the difficulty of pleasing both sides by the assertion that 'all the Protestants of the kingdom have but one common interest, and have too often fatally experienced that they have the same common enemy.'

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the object of England to form a counter-alliance with France, Prussia, and Holland. Austria, not liking the outlook, withdrew. Spain was ready to entertain overtures. A Congress met at Soissons in 1728, where nothing was accomplished beyond mutual entertaining. But in 1729 a treaty was signed at Seville by the terms of which England, France, Holland, and Spain pledged themselves to agreement, leaving Austria in isolation. For his services in this transaction Stanhope* was created Earl of Harrington. Carteret came home at the moment when Walpole was trying to bring the Emperor into his League of Peace. The negotiations were kept secret. All that Carteret cared for was that, whatever happened, France should gain no territorial advantages; he therefore denounced any conceivable project of supporting France in an attack upon German territory. But this Walpole had no intention of doing. If Carteret sought to restrict France's ambitions of conquest, Walpole aimed at preventing warlike operations of all kinds. Nor was he disappointed. In 1731 was signed a second treaty of Vienna in accordance with which the Emperor acceded to the provisions of the Treaty of Seville; and for the time, at all events, there was to be peace.

We have seen that, in 1725, Carteret had in a letter to Edgeworth made it known that he was willing to be friends with Walpole if terms of accommodation could be found. By the time he had returned to London he had satisfied himself that there was no prospect of harmonious co-operation. This conviction was nothing new. He had long contemplated the necessity or convenience of joining

* William Stanhope, ambassador to Spain. He was descended from a brother of the first Earl of Chesterfield. The deceased Lord Stanhope had been grandson of this Earl.

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Walpole's opponents. According to Coxe, 'Carteret (1727) the only man of abilities who was cordially inclined to join the Tories, had little personal consequence, and was not the leader of any party, and did not possess the smallest influence in the House of Commons.' But he was not to be without influence in the House of Lords.

In the House of Commons, Pulteney was in the plenitude of his power as leader of the Opposition—'much the ablest man,' according to Hervey, 'of any figure of note in the position, as well as the most beloved.' Disappointment at receiving no adequate recognition of his allegiance and abilities in 1721 had changed his devotion to Walpole into spite and enmity. In the debates on the Civil List in 1725 he had openly attacked his chief and had associated himself with Bolingbroke in the conduct of the *Craftsman* newspaper. In 1730 he was dismissed from his office of Cofferer of the Household, and although—according to Horace Walpole—the Queen tried to bring him back with an offer of a peerage and Secretaryship of State, he chose to go his own way, vowing that he would never serve under Sir Robert again. Here was a leader of Opposition for the House of Commons. It soon became apparent that in the other chamber Walpole's most formidable opponent was to be the ex-Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. An offer of some Court appointment had been made without cordiality and refused without demur: Carteret, with Chesterfield and Argyle behind him, was ready to show what he could do as a foe if he was not allowed to be a friend.

Carteret had stood high in the favour of George I. His personality had been agreeable to his master: his political views were generally sympathetic. This was,

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perhaps, sufficient reason why he should be looked on with original disfavour by George II., but there was to be additional ground for offence. In 1729, Frederick, Prince of Wales, had come to London, and at once attached himself to the party hostile to his father's government: thus Carteret was associated, whether he liked it or not, with rebellion against the King's authority. In 1736 came Frederick's marriage, upon which occasion Pitt introduced into his speech a spirit so deliberately undutiful that he was deprived of his commission in the army. Then came the quarrel over money and the determination to bring the matter before Parliament. The 'young bloods' of the party, Pitt, Lyttelton, and the Grenvilles, were responsible for this impetuosity. It is only fair to say that Carteret and Pulteney discouraged them; but they could not hope to escape the King's resentment.

During these years, indeed, Carteret often showed a moderation for which he gained no credit. In the case of the Malt Tax agitation he was chosen with Bolingbroke for special condemnation by the Queen, as we have seen; but it does not appear that he tried to make capital out of the troubles of Government, which for the moment were severe.

In 1733 he had been outspoken concerning Walpole's Excise scheme. 'It would place it,' said he, 'in the hands of a wicked administration to reduce the English people to the same condition as the people of Turkey; their only resource will be in mobs and tumults, and the prevailing party will administer justice by general massacres and proscriptions.'

In the case of the Quakers in 1736, on the other hand, he refrained from inflaming prejudice and strife in the

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Church by assailing Walpole in the spirit of faction. In the case of the Porteous riots he almost supported him, although he did take the opportunity of expressing these views upon his management of affairs: 'Power the legislative may give; but authority it can give no man. Authority may be acquired by wisdom, by prudence, by good conduct, and a virtuous behaviour; but it can be granted by no king, by no potentate upon earth. A man's power depends upon the post or station he is in; but his authority can depend upon nothing but the character he acquires among mankind. I must observe, and I do it without a design of offending any person, that ever since I came into the world, I never saw an administration that had, in my opinion, so much power and so little authority.'

Hervey pays an ungracious tribute to Carteret's oratory in an observation upon this period. In an army debate, he says, both he and Chesterfield 'spoke excellently well though in opposition: the one with so much strength, knowledge, and eloquence; the other with so much wit, satire, and ingenuity . . . that they spoke almost as much to the satisfaction of their audience on this occasion as they did on all occasions to their own.' Carteret was a formidable leader of Opposition; but he was no mere bravo of a faction.

That the Queen should dislike Carteret was natural enough: Walpole was her friend; she did not love her son; and Carteret was in opposition to the one and in close alliance with the other. But the episode of the Prince's appeal to Parliament (1737) had given an appreciable shake to Walpole's stability. The Queen had gone so far as to receive Carteret, and she repeated the drift of their

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conversation to the Minister. Carteret had satisfied her that he disapproved of the course which had been taken, but that he had been forced into it by the impetuosity of others. He had gone on to say that he was aware of Walpole's supremacy in her Majesty's estimation: knowing he could never be first, he was ready to serve in a subordinate office; but if Walpole was determined to have no alliance upon any terms, was it not obvious that opposition was the only alternative? This was surely the final expression of the principle of men not measures; but it seemed sound argument to the Queen, and she plainly said as much to Sir Robert. But Sir Robert was determined not to have anything to do with Carteret, and he put it as plainly as courtly language would permit. He made no pretence of denying Carteret's overtures and professions of friendship, but he had said elsewhere, 'I had some difficulty to get him out; he shall find much more to get in again.'

Nor had this been a solitary case. There was another reaction in Carteret's favour after the Prince's surreptitious flight from Hampton Court with his wife in her labour. Carteret could not defend his young master and made no secret of his indignation. This so far soothed the animosity of the parents that Walpole felt constrained to act sharply. The Corporation of London waited upon the Prince to offer their congratulations upon the birth of the child, and the occasion was taken to circulate the edict which the King had issued, banishing his son from the palace. Such comments and embellishments were added as would represent the Prince as an injured victim of tyranny, and Walpole took care

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that the King's resentment for this attack should be directed against Carteret; but according to Hervey 'he put that upon Carteret which was entirely his own doing.' There is no evidence that Carteret defended himself, and Walpole's ignoble ruse, if indeed he were guilty, had its intended effect.

It required, indeed, no great effort of diplomacy to restore the wavering mind of Caroline: her prejudice was deep-rooted. Carteret was not so bad as Chesterfield, who was 'incapable of being a useful servant,' he was 'coquin dans le grand'; Carteret was only 'coquin dans le petit and had really something useful in him, though he was not to be trusted.' The King always spoke of Carteret at this time as a knave and a liar, but that was his appreciation of most men with whom he had to do. Hervey says that both statesmen were 'most abominably given to fable.' After all, we can hardly look for the guilelessness of a dove in one who had to hold his own in politics when the code of honour amongst colleagues is such as we have discovered. Newcastle, even at this moment, was giving Carteret a friendly whisper now and then, so that he should not be entirely estranged in case his present leader and ally, Walpole, should after all succumb.

There is a story belonging to this period which has some interest on its own account, and further affords a ridiculous example of the language and manners of the Court. It was rumoured that Carteret was writing a history of the times; as we might say, he was anticipating Greville: and he was alleged to have promised to ensure an enduring fame for Caroline. The Queen was uneasy. 'Yes, I dare say he will paint you in fine colours,'

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said the King, 'that dirty liar.' The Queen's rejoinder conveyed her secret consciousness of Carteret's worth in most unroyal language: 'Why not?' said she; 'good things come out of dirt sometimes; I have ate very good asparagus raised out of dung.' Lord Hervey said that all he had ever seen of Carteret's writing was bombast mixed with vulgarisms, which implies that he had actually made some excursion into the field of authorship: but the fact remains that nothing more was ever heard of his book. Whether it was only a scheme, taken up and thrown aside, or whether there was a burning of manuscript, we know not; but of this we may be sure, that had such a work ever been completed it would have been of immense value, not only as a record of men and things, but as a revelation of Carteret himself.

Meanwhile he was rooted in opposition. Against his will and his better judgment he had been induced to move for the Prince in the House of Lords, when the question of allowance came before them: according to Chesterfield he was now 'sole adviser at the Prince's Court:' yet he was not an implacable foe, and was open to an offer whenever the Government should find themselves in need of reinforcement. It may be seen at once that in such a situation a consistent and conscientious line of action was beyond attainment and scarcely worth attempting. It has to be admitted that on one occasion he declared that his objections were too sincere to permit him to speak in support of a motion brought forward by his friends, but that he would not fail them when his vote was wanted. He wished to join the Government: he strongly disapproved of their policy in many

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respects; but he undoubtedly believed that if he were admitted to office, he was strong enough to guide and modify their decisions. Meanwhile, he had no other outlet for his energy than to chastise them according to his mood. Probably it was waste of time to attempt to kill their prejudice with kindness; nevertheless he did refrain on occasions, as we have seen, from rancorous hostility, and shaped his course as though he wished to be admitted to their counsels, not to shatter and supplant them.

This moderation we have noted in respect of domestic politics. In the region of foreign affairs his principles were no doubt more firmly settled. It would interest very few readers now to recapitulate the events which made Poland in 1733 the centre of European storm, or to discuss the relative claims of Stanislaus, the ex-king, and Frederick, son of Augustus the Strong. Stanislaus was father of the Queen of France, and since his throne had been taken from him by Augustus he had been dwelling placidly in France. Now Augustus was dead, and Stanislaus was bent upon recovering his kingdom. Encouraged by France, he presented himself at Warsaw and was actually elected King. But Russia and Austria were on the other side, and he had to return as quickly as he came. France was indignant and prepared for active interference. Austria was in no condition for a great war, and the Emperor claimed from England support and a subsidy due to him in accordance with the last Treaty of Vienna. King George was, as usual, in favour of intervention, athirst for military glory. But Walpole clung to his policy of peace at any price.

The King and Carteret were both eagerly opposed to

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French aggression; the one because he always had in mind the possible violation of Hanover; the other because hostility to France was his steadfast principle. Walpole determined to keep within the limits of diplomacy: he sent his brother Horace to the Hague for the purpose of setting schemes of mediation on foot; and his perseverance was rewarded. At first there was no response, but France was presently brought to terms, and a general adjustment was reached in 1735. Poland had fallen into the background. For Stanislaus, France was content to accept the title of King, whilst Frederick Augustus retained the kingdom. She secured with this Lorraine, with a nominal life-interest for him and practical possession for herself. Other conflicting interests were for the moment compromised, if not permanently adjusted, and a new Treaty of Vienna once more damped down, without extinguishing, the flame of war.

It was a triumph for Walpole. He had to hold in check the warlike spirit of the King and Queen: this he had contrived to do, threatening as usual that if England were at war, the friends of the Stuarts would seize the opportunity and that the crown of England would be fought for upon English ground. And he had to control Parliament: here likewise he had gained his purpose. He might have anticipated the fine phrase of John Bright and claimed that he had 'restored tranquillity to Europe, and saved this country from the indescribable calamity of war.' Had Carteret been a more violent partisan, the task might have been more difficult; but he showed no disposition to lead a war party and force the hands of Government. He accepted the terms of settlement with

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composure, and genially observed that Walpole was 'the luckiest dog that ever meddled with public affairs;' whilst Bolingbroke could only add that 'if the English ministers had any hand in it, they were wiser than he thought them; and if not, they were much luckier than they deserved to be.'

It was a triumph for Walpole: but it was his last. How much longer he could have retained his authority, had peace endured, it is idle to surmise. He had, of course, in his long career of power, offended classes and interests and left unsatisfied many aspirations. It is a law of political nature that a Minister must lose rather than gain popularity by lapse of time,* and Walpole's critics had waxed numerous and outspoken. His health was giving way, but with less labour and anxiety he might have been spared the aggravation of disease. His peace policy was to be no longer possible, and the irresistible advent of war was to be attended by the triumph of his enemies. The story of our quarrel with Spain, the great principles involved, and the grotesque intrusion into the controversy of Jenkins's ear, must be dealt with in the section devoted to Walpole: it concerns us here to take notice of Carteret's conduct in the crisis.

Early in 1738 war was once more imminent, and Parliament began to consider the contingency of hostilities with Spain. Carteret, in common with his friends, took this opportunity of advocating a reduction of the army, and this may easily be quoted as an instance of shameless party spirit; but more than one advocate had some reason to offer. Shippen frankly said he disliked standing armies;

* Lord Palmerston is perhaps the most notorious exception to this rule.

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they were intended to intimidate Jacobites and keep the Whigs in power; to which Walpole made his inevitable reply that the Pretender was a permanent source of danger to the country. Pitt, it is true, had committed himself to the principle that 'soldiers were a danger to liberty,' but he was still enjoying the irresponsible exuberance of youth; moreover, he had always safeguarded himself by declaring that the sea was our natural element. Carteret was definite in his conclusions. 'Peace, my Lords,' said he—and he seems to be foreshadowing the phrase first used by Lord John Russell, and afterwards appropriated with so much effect by Lord Beaconsfield—'peace is a desirable thing for any nation, especially a trading nation; but whoever thinks that a peace ought to be purchased at the expense of the honour of his country will at last find himself egregiously mistaken. . . . In such a war,' he went on, 'what can we have to do with a land army? . . . It is by means of our navy only that we can pretend to force Spain to a compliance with our just demands, and therefore, if we are in danger of being involved in a war with that nation, we ought to reduce our army, that we may with the more ease augment our navy.' He paid little attention to Jenkins and his ear; he left it to Pulteney in the Commons to proclaim, 'We have no need of allies; the story of Jenkins will raise volunteers.'

Carteret applied himself to graver issues. The point on which he laid his finger was this: has Spain the right to hold up and search British ships upon the high seas, or is this an outrage on our liberties and an insult to our nation? The whole matter was included in those two

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words, 'No search.' 'No search,' he declared, 'are the words that echo from shore to shore of this island. . . . No search is a cry that runs from the sailor to the merchant, from the merchant to the Parliament, and from Parliament it ought to reach the throne.'

Walpole attempted negotiations with Spain and arranged a stopgap convention, in accordance with which a conference was to be held for settling the amount of compensation due to British merchants for losses inflicted by Spanish ships. The right of search was not to be discussed. Carteret at once exposed the futility of this compromise. Years afterwards, Chatham said: 'This great man has often observed to me that in all the negotiations which preceded the convention, our ministers never found out that there was no ground or subject for any negotiation, and that the Spaniards had not a right to search our ships, and when they attempted to regulate that right by treaty, they were regulating a thing which did not exist.' In the House of Lords Carteret said this plainly: 'The Cardinal Fleury would not suffer a minister to come into the tenth ante-chamber that should talk of searching French ships. . . . The Court of Spain think you dare not attack them. Show them that you dare, and all is over.' But the case was even worse than it seemed upon the surface. First, it was discovered that Spain was to be allowed to make counter-claims for their own shipping destroyed years ago by Byng. Then, under pressure from Carteret, Newcastle was forced to admit that there lay concealed a menace on the part of Spain that if certain taxes upon negro slaves were not immediately paid by the South Sea Company, even existing concessions would

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be revoked. Walpole, now at bay, made a stubborn defence with his old arguments of the certain expense and possible calamity entailed by war, and paraded his bogey of the Pretender. He had a majority of twenty-eight in the House of Commons, and the Opposition adopted the stupid course of secession by way of protest.

We may pause for a moment to observe how long-enduring and how ineffective this parliamentary resource has proved to be. As far back as 1554, there was a secession of members, intended as a protest against proposals for the relief of Roman Catholics. The abstainers were indicted: six submitted and paid fines, the remainder refused and were committed for trial; but the Queen's death put an end to the quarrel. In 1777, there was a secession of Whig opponents to Lord North's American policy; but this was of little consequence: Fox could not be induced to retire, and he joyously carried on Opposition alone. In 1798, there was the better-known secession, headed by Fox and Grey, designed to bring discredit on Pitt's foreign policy. The consequences of this were to give Tierney, who stayed, an opportunity of distinguishing himself and to disorganize the Opposition: 'Secession, did I say, Madam?' exclaimed Sir Philip Francis to Lady Holland: 'dispersion, I mean.' We have recently seen deliberate abstention on the part of a Government as a protest against repeated debate on the subject of Tariff Reform; but it is much to be doubted whether this impatience enhanced the merits of their cause in the public mind. The secession of 1739 may be represented in a more favourable light, inasmuch as it was followed by a triumphant return. Lord Morley says

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the seceders came back when they saw their victim sinking under the growing burden of difficulties. Probably neither their going away nor their coming back made any difference in the result. Walpole could never have withstood the forces moving to his destruction. Carteret strongly deprecated the manœuvre, but Pulteney and Wyndham were obstinate. Whilst they sulked, Walpole was beginning to yield. Spain's tardiness and contumacy left no excuse for further pretence, and the Government were obliged to recommend warlike preparations. Carteret was there to urge them forward and insist upon his German predilections. Prussia, he declared, was our necessary ally, and opposition to French aggression our permanent duty. Prussia's friendship was to be had, and it would be an invaluable asset hereafter. Walpole was wounded: his supporters came not to the rescue, no longer daring to fight for peace. That he must speedily succumb was beyond doubt.

Carteret admitted that Sir Robert was at last doing what ought to have been done long ago; nor did he pretend to ignore the perils involved. 'We are all sorry we cannot make things better,' he wrote to Marchmont; 'for God's sake do not let us make them worse, and if the nation is to be undone (which, by the way, I do not believe it will), let us act so as never to have reason to reproach ourselves of having done amiss, though out of zeal and good intentions, in this critical conjuncture.'

In the summer the Government gave up hope of escape, and sent an ultimatum to Madrid requiring a formal renunciation of the right of search; this remained unsatisfied, and on November 3rd, 1739, war was declared.

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Horace Walpole, with not unpardonable prejudice, says that Carteret 'fomented' this disastrous war in order to overturn Sir Robert Walpole. There is no reason to suppose that he did anything of the kind, except in the sense that he believed war to be inevitable and was honestly indignant at Sir Robert's weakness. Indeed, he now took the line that everything must be sacrificed to the vigorous prosecution of hostilities, and went no further than to express a doubt whether those who had been so dilatory and feeble in the preceding negotiations were fit to be trusted with a policy of action. Pulteney and Wyndham, once more in their places, assailed the Minister personally and mercilessly. It was made tolerably clear that they meant to compass his destruction.

The war began not unfavourably, but our single-handed combat with Spain was soon to sink into insignificance in the vast field of operations now coming into view. In 1740 died the King of Prussia and the Emperor Charles VI., and a European war began which endured as long as Carteret's own life. Meanwhile, the Government were to be hotly pursued. As though Carteret were apt to be too tender, Argyle assumed the lead when Parliament met in 1740, and made a fiery onslaught. Carteret was obliged to assume a similar tone if he were not to forfeit his position, and for once he had resource to fierce invective. In February 1741 he rose to make a formal attack. His speech was a comprehensive review of foreign affairs and an earnest exposition of the necessity of keeping France out of Germany. This time he spared Walpole the fiery darts of raillery, but he condemned him as a man who had failed at his post and sacrificed the interests committed to his charge.

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He moved 'that the King be advised to remove Sir Robert from his presence and counsels for ever.' The old Duchess of Marlborough said of this speech: 'My Lord Carteret did speak two hours as well as any man in the world could speak, but all in vain.' Stair quaintly described it as 'one of the finest discourses I ever saw in any language.' Vain it was, inasmuch as Walpole's friends defeated the motion; how far it satisfied Carteret one cannot be sure. There was an impression that his heart was not in his work. Charles Yorke wrote to Philip Yorke: 'I should imagine, if what one heard of Lord Carteret's inclinations before was true, that he moved the question in some sort against his opinion'; and Conway told Walpole that after Carteret sat down he remained for some time in the undignified occupation of biting his nails and scratching his head. It is not easy to account for his scruples. He had no reason to be delicate with Walpole; he disapproved of his policy; he must have seen power coming within his own grasp. He may conceivably have disliked attacking the Minister now that he actually had the conduct of war upon his hands; but he could have little faith in the capacity of the present Government. It has been said that Carteret never really cared for office and was half afraid of the responsibility he was assuming. Evidence of that is insufficient to explain his diffidence at this period of his life, and the alternative had better be assumed, that he felt no reluctance in attacking Walpole, but that it was not his nature to be violent, and that the relaxations in which he indulged after his exertions were only symptoms of physical reaction.

Walpole, indeed, was saved for the moment. Maria Theresa had been proclaimed successor to her father's

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Austrian dominions, and King George was committed to the recognition of her claims. But Frederick of Prussia at once invaded Silesia. George was not a man to be bullied or frightened, and he was disposed to support his words with action; but he could not forget that war in Germany might imperil the security of Hanover. This predilection did not escape the usual comment; it was suggested that the King's eagerness to support Maria Theresa was due to his apprehension of Frederick's acquisitive instincts. Carteret supported George for other reasons, and sang his old song: 'If this be not done,' he said, 'the Queen of Hungary will throw herself into the arms of France. . . . The King should hazard all upon it and we should stand by him.' Frederick defeated Maria Theresa's army at Mollwitz; the news of this reached London on April 25th (1741); Parliament at once voted Maria Theresa a subsidy of three hundred thousand pounds, and King George, attended by Harrington, hastened to Hanover to take command of the troops enlisted or hired for his service.

At present he had no *casus belli*, and was thrown back upon the resources of diplomacy to seek for some terms of accommodation between the contending parties, but the case was only altered for the worse. Frederick made a treaty with France, and the Elector of Bavaria was put forward as candidate for the Empire. Neither party to the quarrel, however, was fully prepared to push matters to a final issue, and in October a temporary peace was secured, Frederick retaining the territory he had already seized.

English sympathy had been with the young Queen, and there was nothing in this arrangement to gratify the

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national ardour or bring credit to the Government. In December there was a general election. Walpole was left in power, but there was a sense of impending fall. In the debate on the King's Speech, Carteret spoke as a statesman rather than a courtier. He was disturbed by the Franco-Prussian alliance. 'A thing is said in the Speech which I am sure the King believes,' said he, 'and yet I would not confirm him in it. He says he has done all he could for the House of Austria. We shall be able to make him change his opinion. . . . There were strong words in the last address about the Queen of Hungary; but they did her no good, and she will not mind these now.' On Walpole he did not press with severity; but in the House of Commons, Pulteney was unbridled. He even charged the Minister with treacherous correspondence with the enemy. Walpole, goaded out of his old complacency, challenged his accuser to make a formal arraignment. Pulteney jumped at the opening, and a day was fixed, January 21st, 1742. Walpole escaped defeat here by the barest majority, yet he held on. There was an election petition pending: on that he staked his last chance. He was beaten and he resigned, and Carteret once more beheld the way to power lying open before him.

We have seen that Carteret had always been ready to attach himself to the Government if Walpole had not forced him into enmity. Pulteney had been more uncompromising; yet Chesterfield wrote to Bubb Dodington: 'Their behaviour these few years has shown their views and negotiations with the Court; but surely their conduct at the end of last session puts that matter out of all dispute [their desire to form a Government]. You will ask me whether all

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this is in the power of Carteret and Pulteney. I answer yes, in the power of Pulteney alone.' Dodington, who was as ardent an intriguer as any man alive, was now courting Argyle and trying to seduce Wilmington. 'I have good reason to believe,' he wrote, 'that C.* is (and has been for some time) strongly at work with N. and C.† to deprive you of the honour of this great event' (the succession to Walpole). Sir R. Wilmot wrote to the Duke of Devonshire: 'It is well known that Pulteney carries with him but four members, and that Lord Carteret has few followers besides the Finches.' In another letter he surmises, 'if somebody must be brought in, it is thought that Lord Carteret will unsay all he has said, and be heartily glad to laugh at the great Argyle.'

Such was the gossip and speculation which preceded Walpole's resignation. Carteret and Pulteney were inevitable, and the man to whom the reversion of office was assigned by general consent was Pulteney. Newcastle eyed him as the next object for his intriguing calculations. Walpole regarded him with graver concern: it was not at all improbable that his successor would impeach him, and he wanted to agree with his adversary quickly whilst he was in the way with him. Matters went so far that a meeting was arranged between Newcastle and Lord Chancellor Hardwicke on the one part, and Pulteney and Carteret on the other. But there were two impediments to a bargain with Pulteney: it might not be in his power to protect Walpole, and he was bound by an old pledge, given in a moment of virtuous self-denial, that he would

* Carteret.

† Newcastle, and probably the Chancellor, who was Newcastle's special ally.

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never again enjoy the profits of official life. He declared that Carteret stood higher than he in the King's favour, and that he undoubtedly expected, and was entitled to expect, first place, if he himself were out of the way. But if the King was not so ill-disposed towards Carteret, he had an older and deeper attachment. It speaks well for his steadfastness that the man of his choice was Lord Wilmington, the Sir Spencer Compton to whom he had referred Walpole for orders when the tidings of his father's death had interrupted his afternoon nap.* Wilmington therefore became Prime Minister. Pulteney, as a compromise, entered the Cabinet without a department. To Carteret he wrote, 'You must be Secretary of State as the fittest person to direct foreign affairs.' And so it was ordered: Harrington was transferred to the Presidency of the Council; Newcastle tenaciously clung to the other Secretaryship. Pulteney claimed a peerage and became Earl of Bath.

That Pulteney's talents and qualities which had won him so much fame in the House of Commons should have proved distasteful to the House of Lords would be matter for no astonishment, but it is not easy to understand why his translation should have shattered his popularity and ended his career. The House of Lords in those days was not an object of jealousy and reproach; it was as powerful and as free from the shadow of reform as in any other period of its history. Yet Pulteney was condemned as having done something paltry and unpatriotic, and his elevation was turned to

* According to another version, Pulteney nominated Wilmington as an alternative to himself.

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political suicide. Walpole had become Earl of Orford; but his career was obviously ended. Pitt later incurred criticism for changing his House, but his loss of authority has been exaggerated. Lord Beaconsfield was undoubtedly as great a figure in the eyes of Europe as Disraeli had been. Pulteney alone, for some obscure reason, has earned an evil fame because he chose to become a peer.

Carteret was now at his zenith. 'The Government was always spoken of as his,' says his biographer. According to Lord Stanhope, he was 'considered by the people, and was, in fact, the new Prime Minister.' Wilmington was of course only a figure-head: his colleagues had to recognise that a greater than they had come amongst them. But Carteret's path was strewn with false footholds. He was no party manager, and he had to do with men who made that the test of statesmanship. Whether Walpole bribed or not, it is certain that he knew the value of these arts: he governed, it was said, by a system of attachment. 'What is it to me who is a judge or who is a bishop?' demanded Carteret, when some one pestered him with a request for patronage; 'it is my business to make Kings and Emperors, and to maintain the balance of Europe.' To Henry Fox he once said, 'I want to instil a noble ambition into you; to make you knock the heads of the Kings of Europe together, and jumble something out of it that may be of service to the country.' Speaker Onslow said of Carteret that he 'was all for glory, and thought much more of raising a great name to himself all over Europe . . . than any present domestic renown or popularity.' In fact he did not lay himself out to catch popularity, nor had he to set against this a tale of victory and triumph such as Pitt

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was to dazzle the nation with a few years later. He was absorbed in the adjustment of the balance of power in Europe, but he could not show that it was the might of England and the fear of her resentment that kept that balance true. We may surely credit him with ambition such as this in spite of Lord Stanhope's sneer that 'he made every sacrifice of British interests, and of his own popularity, in order to secure the personal favour of the King'—an allegation which Carlyle denounces as the invention of his enemies and contrary to fact.

Meanwhile, within the Cabinet, there was jealousy; amongst its supporters there was discontent. Pitt, Lyttelton, and the Grenvilles were resentful, because they had not been offered places. Argyle was dissatisfied with his post at the War Office, and at a meeting of the party protested against the inclusion of any of Walpole's colleagues in the new Administration. He demanded 'a homogeneous Government, based upon a broad bottom.' Presently he resigned and went into opposition. The Duke of Newcastle of course played his own game, and that was not compatible with the ascendancy of Carteret. According to Horace Walpole, 'My father said (July 1742), "My Lord, whenever the Duke is near overturning you, you have nothing to do but to send to me, and I will save you." . . . The King afterwards only spoke to my Lord Carteret.' But as we shall see, Sir Robert was not going to be quite as good as his word.

Abroad there was much to occupy the mind of Carteret to the exclusion of personal squabbles. A French army had been pressing forward to the support of the Elector of Bavaria. Frederick was angry with Austria for revealing

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the terms of their treaty, which had been avowedly secret. He went over to the Franco-Bavarian alliance, and on January 24th, 1742, the Elector was proclaimed Emperor as Charles VII. It was at this juncture that Carteret came upon the scene. He did not wish for war; but rather than see France triumphant, he would 'knock the heads of Kings of Europe together.' He procured from Parliament a vote of half a million for Maria Theresa, and he set about driving a wedge between Prussia and France by showing how few interests they possessed in common. He was encouraged by the checks which for a time impeded the operations of the Prussian arms; but in May a decisive reverse brought the Queen to terms.

Nothing would satisfy Frederick but the cession of Silesia, and to this consent was yielded by the Treaty of Breslau. Austria and Prussia were now at peace, and for his share in bringing matters to this point Carteret received credit from all his contemporaries, including the Prussian king. Amongst historians, Carlyle for one gives due appreciation to his power and adroitness. But the time was at hand when England must take an active part in the struggle. Stair was sent to the Netherlands to take command of a combined army of English, Hanoverians, Hessians, and Austrians. The Dutch contingent which should have been on the spot was not forthcoming, and Carteret himself went to the Hague to stir up the lazy Government. He attacked them with so much spirit that they declared themselves ready to produce both men and money; but they were not roused to enduring energy. Carlyle represents the situation in the following elaborate periphrase: 'The cunningest leaverage, every sort

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of diplomatic block and tackle, Carteret and Stair themselves running over to help in critical seasons, is applied ; to almost no purpose. Pull long, pull strong, pull all together,—see, the heavy Dutch do stir ; some four inches of daylight fairly visible below them : bear a hand, oh bear a hand ! Pooh, the Dutch flap down again as low as ever.’ *

Carteret hastened home. On the way he was nearly drowned ; and he had not the satisfaction of feeling that his mission had been effective. No definite results were achieved, and it was decided that at so late a season of the year it was not possible to enter on a campaign : this must be held over till next year. He was now the target for all those who turned their weapons on the Government. Bath was no longer a power : Wilmington was a cipher. Nobody cared for Sandys, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, nor thought it worth while to consider Newcastle.

Sir Charles Hanbury Williams described the situation in verse :

Great Earl of Bath, your reign is o’er ;
The Tories trust your word no more,
The Whigs no longer fear ye ;
Your gates are seldom now unbarred,
No crowds of coaches fill your yard,
And scarce a soul comes near ye.
Expect to see that tribe no more,
Since all mankind perceives that power
Is lodged in other hands ;
Sooner to Carteret they’ll go,
Or even (though that’s excessive low)
To Wilmington or Sandys.

* *Frederick the Great.*

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When Parliament met in November 1742, Pitt led the attack, but Carteret had sufficient hold on his followers in both Houses to stand secure. 'The present question is,' was his plain summary of the case, 'will you submit to France or not? I will always traverse the views of France, in place or out of place; for France will ruin this nation if it can.' Therefore he resolutely refused to countenance a reduction in the military establishment at Hanover; and so it came to pass that next year he found himself actually upon the field of battle.

Stair, the general commanding, was in a very bad temper: he considered himself neglected, and chafed under his long inaction. He chose to blame Carteret; and although he made a show of contrition, and wrote that 'Lord Carteret will with justice be thought the mainspring of moving the great machine,' yet he appears to have nursed his grievance and, as we have seen, resumed his unfriendly tone in later years.

The Dutch, despite their promises, were still in default, and Carteret went again to the Hague to compel them, if he could, to activity. Thence he passed—in May 1743—to Hanover, where George was indulging at last the instinct for military enterprise which he had so grudgingly suppressed throughout Walpole's long predominance. Stair was in nominal command. He had for some time been eager to attack the French at once, but his Austrian colleague had a less dashing temperament. This must have aggravated his impatience and disgust. Whether the arrival of his Sovereign was a relief or the culmination of his grievances is not clear, but he eventually resigned and was allowed to go home. The King had come to put into

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practice the theory that France must be withstood on German territory: he meant to fight, and fight he did. Carteret was a civilian, and military details do not properly belong to his biography. He was afterwards accused of taking upon himself the functions of a general officer, but this only serves to show that he considered the disposal of military forces to be part of a diplomatist's resources.

On June 27th the allied army moved from Aschaffenberg towards Hanover. This was in the nature of a retreat, and King George chose to stay with the rearguard as the post of danger. But the French had intercepted them. Noailles, who commanded, entrusted this movement to the Duke of Grammont, who had orders to wait for the enemy beyond the village of Dettingen. The allies must approach through broken and boggy ground, and here the Frenchmen should have had them at their mercy. The enemy were in their rear: they must advance and fight at a disadvantage. In fact they were caught in what Mr. Fortescue* calls a mousetrap. The situation was critical, and apparently desperate. There was immediate prospect of an ignominious and inexpiable failure for the King and his minister. But George was in luck. The Duke of Grammont disobeyed orders: he could not wait; gave orders for attack, and at once reversed the situation created by the ground. He incurred all the difficulties under which the allies should have laboured. It has already been related how King George galloped to the front; how his horse became unmanageable; and how he immediately threw himself on foot at the head of his infantry and delivered himself of some of the most truly British sentiments that ever fell from the lips of a British

* *History of the British Army.* By Hon. J. W. Fortescue.

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King. The battle was fierce and wholly incompatible with the principles of any known drill-book; but the result was all that George's heart could desire. It was no affair of brushing aside an advanced party. The French were in force and, if no one had blundered on their side, they could not well have missed their opportunity. As it was they were fairly defeated and put to rout. 'Seldom,' says Mr. Fortescue, 'has a commander found more fortunate issue from a series of blunders than King George.'

Carteret's share in the day's work went little beyond contributing a touch of humour. He sat at a safe distance in his coach; and here he was accosted by the Archbishop of Mayence, who appears to have understood neither war nor diplomacy. 'Milord, je proteste contre toute violence,' he cried. Carteret's work began as soon as the victory was won. His dispatches as literary compositions were not admired. He is said to have confessed that they were written in terms not good enough for a tallow chandler to have used. Lord Fitzmaurice has recorded that Lord Shelburne once declared that neither Carteret nor Pitt could write a decent letter. The substance of his communication, however, was all that the public cared about.

Carteret at once turned to diplomacy. France was beaten and was not going to interfere any more. Charles VII. was isolated. Now was the moment to effect a lasting settlement. Whilst some of his critics were blaming Carteret for playing the part of general, Chesterfield for one found fault because he exchanged the sword for the pen too soon and failed to follow up the advantage gained over French arms. Three years later he wrote to Newcastle: 'If we had pursued the victory of Dettingen, Fontenoy had never been.'

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Carteret was content—France he regarded as disposed of: Maria Theresa was open to conviction: Frederick raised no difficulties; and Carteret proceeded with his scheme. Charles VII. was informed that if he would entirely renounce the French alliance and give up all claim to Austrian territory, he could rely on England's support in establishing himself securely in his Bavarian dominions. The Imperial title would be recognised and a subsidy would not be denied. Carteret secured the King's assent, but when the negotiations were referred home for confirmation they were repudiated at once. Newcastle accused Carteret of committing his Government by making 'unknown promises.' To one correspondent he wrote: 'It is a most strange, unfair, unpardonable proceeding in Lord Carteret, but what we must always expect from him.' A treaty was concluded at Worms in September, and to this England became to some extent a party; but Carteret's complete scheme was thwarted. He had a definite policy and he had the King on his side, but not King and Carteret combined were a match for Newcastle. This is perhaps the most remarkable instance of the Duke's power of enforcing his will and holding his ground in spite of the infirmities of character and intellect ascribed to him in history. The members of the Cabinet professed deep indignation because Carteret was conducting affairs on his own responsibility and without their knowledge and consent. The letters that passed amongst them show that this was their agreed pretext: their real motive was jealousy and desire to be rid of their masterful colleague. At this stage of the struggle Wilmington died. His loss mattered little to England, but it at once affected the position of the Government. Carteret

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urged upon the King the claims of Bath. His opponents declared for Pelham; and Orford, to whose counsel the King continued to pay heed, decided in their favour. The King was no lover of Bath, whom he remembered only as a friend of the Prince of Wales and leader of the Opposition, and Pelham became First Lord of the Treasury. Carteret at once wrote to his new chief, pointing out that if he had not spoken for his old comrade, Bath, no man would ever again put faith in his friendship; but he declared that he entertained no jealousy or malice, and was ready to play the part of a loyal colleague. Newcastle admitted that this was a manly letter; but it was the case of the wolf and the lamb in the fable. Newcastle for one was implacable, and Pelham, a milder-mannered man, was afraid of Carteret. Carteret was not unaware of his danger: 'I must own that my friends have been near ruining me at different times,' he had written from Hanover, 'of which I shall take care for the future, being past fifty-three.'

The King and his Minister came home in November 1743, to find themselves anything but popular heroes. The Prince of Wales had had born to him another son; Princess Louise was given in marriage to the Prince of Denmark. On these joyful occasions the City of London offered their congratulations; but no mention was made of George's gallant exploit at Dettingen: 'No Hanoverian king' was the common toast. Parliament met, and Carteret found himself, in a fighting sense, with his back to the wall. Even his ally Chesterfield argued that the right policy was to attend to our own business with Spain and leave France and Germany to settle their own affairs. His sneering allusion to the Treaty of Worms had a foulness of wit not to

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be expected from one who was for ever singing hymns to 'the Graces.' Carteret in defence was impenitent. It was our obvious duty, he said, to keep France out of Germany. This we had succeeded in doing. His own diplomacy at Hanover had detached Prussia from the French alliance and effected an accommodation between Frederick and Maria Theresa, whose position he had further strengthened by cementing her friendship with Sardinia. But the Opposition were not to be appeased. Pitt at present aspired to no consistency of principle: his rash professions were often contradictory of one another and wholly incompatible with the judgments of his maturity. It was during the ensuing debates that he hurled at Carteret the abusive titles set forth at the beginning of this chapter. At the same time Carteret's colleagues were doing their best to make his foothold loose. Those dinners were being given at which the Pelhams, with Harrington and the Lord Chancellor, agreed upon a line of action before their evening conference with Carteret. Chesterfield told Marchmont that these gentlemen relied with confidence on the scheme of pacification which they had succeeded in thwarting as an engine in their hands to be used some day against the Foreign Secretary. Nor were the public kinder to him: in an anonymous letter he was informed that three hundred men had sworn to tear him limb from limb. His only succour reached him from an unexpected source, for Orford, reluctant to see his old master in adversity, became something of a Hanoverian.

Early in 1744, fresh troubles came in sight. It was known that a Jacobite invasion was to be attempted from Brest. In February a squadron sailed, and the

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people of England thought that the hour of invasion had arrived. Admiral Norris put to sea and a battle was imminent, when the tempest, which one is accustomed to associate with such adventures, dissipated at once the invaders and their projects. But France declared war on England. King George was eager to take the field once more; but he was overruled, and the command of the army in the Netherlands was entrusted to Wade. The campaign was a failure and Carteret had the mortification of seeing France returning on her victorious raids. Frederick, by no means assured of Maria Theresa's good intentions, reverted to his French alliance. The new development turned the balance against Carteret; but he was not going to fall without a struggle. Newcastle, writing for himself and his brother, reported that 'we both look upon it that either my Lord Carteret will go out (which I hardly think is his scheme, or at least his inclination) or that he will be uncontrollable master.' At all events, the Duke understood his man. 'Things cannot go on as they are,' wrote Carteret to him: 'they must be brought to some decision. I will not submit to be overruled and out-voted on every point by four to one. If you will take the Government, you may; if you cannot or will not, there must be some direction, and I will do it.' He protested with obvious sincerity that if only they had supported him in his Hanau negotiations, these difficulties would never have arisen. Predilection for his own designs naturally convinced him that he was right; that with his critics lay the blame. Added to this was the consciousness of his own superiority in insight and experience where foreign affairs were concerned. What must he

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feel, the trained diplomatist and accomplished linguist, when he read such a confession of incompetence as his chief had to make: 'Boetzlaar is very angry; but as I don't speak French, I avoided having any converse with him'?

In November 1744 the crisis came. Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, on behalf of his section of the Cabinet, presented an ultimatum to the King: they would no longer serve with Carteret. Orford, in his retreat, was once more the man of the hour. In him Carteret placed his final hopes: to him the King turned as his last resource. It was a dying effort; but he came to London. Old ties bound him to Pelham's side, and he advised the King to let Carteret go. Thus he failed to fulfil the promise of support against the Duke which he had given in 1742.

On November 24th, 1744, Carteret resigned. Horace Walpole wrote that 'resolution and capacity were all that they [the Pelhams] wanted to bring this about; for the imperiousness and universal contempt which their rival had for them, and for the rest of the ministry, and for the rest of the nation, had made almost all men his enemies; and indeed, he took no pains to make friends. His maxim was, "Give any man the Crown on his side and he can defy anything."' Murray wrote to Marchmont that the King was 'entirely wedded to Carteret.' Horace Walpole admitted that he 'had the principle interest with the King.' Unwarned by Sir Robert's fate, he put his trust in princes to sustain him in all assaults of his enemies; but where Walpole had succumbed, Carteret could not hope to survive. With the exception of Bath, Winchelsea, Tweeddale, the Duke of Bolton, and Lord Cholmondeley, the entire

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Government clamoured against him to the King, and accordingly he fell.

II.

Three events of domestic interest belong to this period: in June 1743 Lady Carteret died: in April 1744 Carteret married again. In October 1744 his mother died, and he must be henceforth called Lord Granville. It will be convenient to say no more of the first two events, in order that the political story may not be interrupted.

Carteret had fallen; but the Pelhams found no security without him. It was known that the King grudged the loss of a man whom, in spite of his former prejudice, he found sympathetic both in manner and opinions. However, they were in possession and they claimed for their Government the favourite title of 'broad-bottomed,' which appears to have possessed the charm which, in our day, is exercised by the term 'efficient.' Amongst the new adherents was Chesterfield, who was recommended for Ireland. Henry Fox was also included. Pitt's conduct now must be considered in its proper place: it is only pertinent here so far as it relates to Carteret. He had been one of Carteret's most savage opponents: he was accordingly an ardent upholder of those who had compassed his defeat; but it was at once apparent that his animosity was aimed rather at the man than his measures. The Pelhams soon discovered that they must adopt some parts of Carteret's policy which they had most sternly condemned: amongst them the retention of British troops in Flanders and the payment of subsidies. Newcastle made no attempt to conceal his uneasiness, but Pitt was less sensitive. He boldly advocated a policy which bore a close resemblance

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to that against which he had declaimed so fiercely, and airily asserted that Carteret's disappearance had put matters on a different footing. He even supported an increase of subsidy to Maria Theresa on the tacit understanding that part of this was to find its way into the pockets of the Hanoverian contingent.

On January 20th, 1745, died the Emperor Charles VII. Things were going badly on the Continent. England was fighting France, and under the leadership of the Duke of Cumberland was suffering defeat at Fontenoy and elsewhere. Frederick of Prussia was once more in arms against Maria Theresa, and pressing her sorely. To add to the King's annoyance, the Pelhams chose this opportunity for recommending Pitt for appointment as Secretary at War. This time George was resolute. The Pelhams had to yield, but they yielded in no spirit of meekness. The times were evil and they meant to fish in troubled waters. The country was in the convulsions of 'the forty-five': it was one of those occasions upon which ministers ought to accept the Duke of Wellington's maxim, that the King's Government must be carried on. The Pelhams thought it a favourable moment for resigning; and here comes the most memorable incident of Carteret's career. The propriety of this resignation may be debated at length. Carteret's biographer goes so far as to admit that the Pelhams only intended to forestall the King's purpose of dismissing them, but he holds them liable to grave censure. Pelham's biographer says that they were dismissed. A letter from Newcastle to Chesterfield seems to establish the truth between the two extremes. For some reason, which is nowhere indicated, Bath was now

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in high favour with the King. It is probably safe to assume that he had contrived to humour his master's prejudice against the Government. This policy he pursued by encouraging George's determination to keep Pitt out of the War Office. Newcastle was shrewd enough to perceive that 'though Lord Bath was the open transactor it is not to be imagined but that my Lord Granville was in the secret.' Pitt waived his claim, and the principal source of trouble was presumably removed; but the ministers represented to the King that, if they were to maintain their authority, he must give them some public mark of his confidence. The King was not in a conciliatory mood, and replied with several vigorous comments on the management of affairs both at home and abroad. It was evident that he was out of temper with the times and wanted to change his administration: ministers reflected that sooner or later they would have to yield to his displeasure.

An unnamed correspondent of the British Envoy at Venice, says, 'They came to a sudden resolution not to do Lord Granville's business, by carrying supplies, and then be turned out.' Newcastle confirms this: he tells Chesterfield that on February 6th they found the position had become critical: they therefore hit upon a plan of which the object seems to have been to inflict the greatest possible amount of annoyance on the King and inconvenience on the public service: they were to go off like minute-guns and retire in succession. Harrington began on the 10th; and now it should appear that the King by no means desired a complete evacuation of place, for he covered his Foreign Secretary with reproaches for his faithlessness

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and ingratitude in leaving him. Newcastle retired next ; then Pelham ; then the Chancellor : after these it mattered little who resigned or when. Immediately the King sent for Granville, handed him the seals of both Foreign departments, and gave him unlimited discretion in forming his Government. Bath accepted the office of First Lord of the Treasury, and for a few hours the Government consisted of what a contemporary writer called 'the two most unpopular noblemen in the kingdom.' Whether this be just or not, they had certainly no such following as would afford material for cabinet-making. In any case the effort must have proved abortive ; but on the second day Bath's courage failed him, or his old self-denying ordinance weighed upon his conscience : he threw up his commission. Granville was zealously hunting up recruits : some one said it was not safe to walk the streets at night for fear of being pressed for a cabinet minister. But it would not do : the farce was soon over. 'Lord Granville is as jolly as ever,' wrote the same gossip already quoted ; 'laughs and drinks ; owns it was mad, and that he would do it again to-morrow.'

Here we must pause for a moment to consider the delicate question as to whether Granville was particularly addicted to drink. Macaulay thought so. 'The period of his ascendancy,' he writes, 'was known by the name of the "Drunken administration ;" and the expression was not altogether figurative. His habits were extremely convivial, and champagne probably lent its aid to keep him in that joyous excitement in which his life was passed.' Elsewhere he speaks of 'his daily half-gallon of burgundy' ; and in describing the fiasco which we have now noticed,

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he employs the cheerful phrase, 'from that time he relinquished all his ambitious hopes, and retired laughing to his books and his bottle.' Mr. Frederic Harrison goes further, and speaks of him in 1751 as an extinct volcano and a drunkard; yet one may read a good deal of contemporary history without being aware that he was regarded as an offender beyond the limits of polite usage. The biographer of Walpole and of Pelham had an obvious inclination to depreciate Granville, but in his first book he says nothing of his intemperate habits, and in the second he is satisfied with a reference to another author who charges him with 'habits of excess.' Hervey, who was ill-natured and hated Granville, says nothing of his weakness. Chesterfield roundly charges him with the 'vice of drinking,' and he should surely know; but Chesterfield had a fastidious dislike of intemperance, and he would surely be a severe judge. Horace Walpole's evidence must be treated with caution. He would naturally incline towards asperity; moreover, he wrote for effect. In 1752 he said of the coming christening of Lord Egremont's child: 'His Majesty, the Earl of Granville (if he can stand), and the Duchess of Somerset are to be sponsors:' upon which his editor drily comments, 'Lord Granville was a great drinker.' In 1767, Walpole notes that Lord Gower is to be President of the Council: 'it is a drunken place by prescription: Lord Granville had it.' Elsewhere he confesses that it was difficult to say whether he was intoxicated with wine or ambition. It may be assumed then that he was a copious drinker, but not a scandalous drunkard. In a drinking age he was a hard drinker, but not an abandoned sot.

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Meanwhile, the King was left without a Government, and he had no alternative choice. The manœuvre of the Pelhams had succeeded, and they came back on firm ground. Harrington was allowed to return, but the King vented on him all the resentment he felt at the failure of the Granville project. He had probably intended that Harrington should have remained when the Pelhams went, and fortified the new system ; instead of which, he had been the first to go. He was not forgiven, and the grudge was so persistent that it was presently found expedient to remove him to the inevitable asylum of Dublin Castle, and bring over Chesterfield to fill his place. Pitt, meanwhile, had to be endured—not, indeed, as Secretary at War, but none the less a servant of the Crown. He became joint Vice-Treasurer of Ireland.

Granville, it must be assumed, was content with his books and his bottle, for he retired into eclipse ; and there is no evidence to contradict the assertion that his ambition was extinguished : he never attempted to regain his old authority. Had his desire still been fixed upon power, the opportunities were not to be denied him. The eclipse was to pass, but the midsummer ardour was never to be re-kindled.

The years that followed were not filled with stirring events. The Cabinet had plenty of leisure for personal quarrels ; the moving spirits of discord were Bedford and Sandwich, against whom Newcastle's jealousy was aroused. Looking round in search of comfort and succour, he began to speculate on the possibility of making terms with Granville. In 1749 he actually offered him the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland ; but Granville declined it. He then

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proposed to go further, and try to negotiate for his appointment as Secretary of State ; but Pelham was stubborn, and refused to accept him as a colleague. Jealousy was still rife. In June, Horace Walpole records that the King had 'bestowed six vacant Ribbons of the Bath, one to a Margrave of Anspach, a near relation of the late Queen ; others to the Dukes of Leeds and Bedford, Lords Albemarle and Granville ; the last, you may imagine, gives some uneasiness.' Granville's biographer says nothing of this ; he does not even mention that he had the Garter. 'Regardless of ceremonial decorations himself,' we read, 'he cared nothing who had this Garter or that green ribband.' This is misleading. In the portrait, by an unknown hand, which Lord Tweeddale has at Yester, Granville appears in all the dignity of the Star and Riband of the Garter. The face is disappointing, for the eyes are small and mean, and the features rather gross ; but there is no mistaking the proud and decorated patrician.

Newcastle, meanwhile, had yielded, and the Government jolted on. Two years later, however, the brothers screwed up their courage, and got rid of Bedford and Sandwich. Then Newcastle had his way : Pelham was obliged to accept the inevitable alternative, and surrender his position of permanent hostility. Granville became Lord President of the Council. The reconciliation was effected at the house of a common friend, and we are told that here, at all events, the soothing influence of wine was not neglected in order to commit past asperities to oblivion. Granville appears to have had no illusions, and to have looked upon his colleagues with considerable detachment of mind. He assured them that he had every inten-

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tion of loyally supporting them, and no desire whatever to become involved in disputes and rivalries; but to a correspondent he confided that 'I am the King's President; I know nothing of the Pelhams; I have nothing to do with them.'

Pelham himself was suspicious; he was confident that Granville intended to trade upon the King's favour, and usurp the first place in Government. 'The Duke of Cumberland dreads Granville,' he wrote to his brother; ' . . . you know what I think of that measure [Granville's appointment].' To which the Duke replied, consolingly, 'His Majesty has no intention to combat for my Lord Granville.' Horace Walpole wrote: 'Lord Granville comes into power as boisterously as ever. His lieutenants beat up for volunteers. He disclaims all connection with Lord Bath, who, he says, forced upon him the famous ministry of twenty-four hours, and by which he says he paid all his debts to him.' Who were Granville's lieutenants we are not told; we know only of the Finches. Horace Walpole repeatedly declares that he 'made no friends'; the only faithful adherent he ever put to his credit was 'Doctor Lee, a civilian,' who held one of the Admiralty offices.*

Boisterous or otherwise, Granville was content to remain Lord President until his death, twelve years later. From the first he took an active part in affairs. We were to be occupied with wars abroad, in which he had both direct and indirect concern, and his instinct for foreign politics was constantly alert. In 1751 he made a speech which has been

* He became Sir George Lee, and was to have been Chancellor of the Exchequer in one of the proposed schemes of Government in 1757. The project was suspended, and Lee was disappointed.

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used to illustrate the assertion of his critics that he was liable to rant and bombast. The King of Denmark had asked what was meant by the declaration in the preamble to the Mutiny Bill that we kept 18,000 men to preserve the balance of Europe. 'I told him, my Lords, one day can make those eighteen, fifty thousand.' That he was fond of phrase-making is shown by his repudiation of a certain memorial as 'the distempered frenzies of cloistered zealots,' which ought to have won him the admiration of Disraeli. In 1753 he dismissed the Jews Bill as 'the nothingness of a nothing;' and two years later he introduced a strange sentence into a grave debate. We were at war with France on the continent of America; in the home seas we were in conflict with the ships of France without formal declaration of hostilities. The Cabinet were in a state of perplexity and vacillation. Should they strike at once, or wait on events? Should they seek to destroy the naval power of France forthwith, or begin by harassing her trade? Granville had no doubts or hesitation. Meddling with trade he declared to be 'vexing your neighbour for a little muck. If you hit, hit hard,' was his advice; and, according to Lord Shelburne, although he pretended to be only an onlooker at the Council Board, it was his firmness and spirit that saved the situation.

In 1756, Newcastle, who had become Prime Minister on his brother's death (1754), found the art of government beyond the compass of his methods and resources. The foreign outlook was stormy; the domestic situation was unstable. Discipline and harmony were missing in the ranks of his subordinate colleagues. Dearly as he loved influence and office, he was not the man to face fearful

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odds ; he offered to resign the place of First Minister in Granville's favour, and Granville refused.

Newcastle stumbled on. He saw that his best chance of safety lay in promoting Pitt, but Pitt's terms were too high. He did succeed in getting Fox to lead the House of Commons, but this only brought down on him the vengeance of Pitt. In May, war with France was declared, and the British Government were reduced to the ignominious necessity of summoning Hanoverian and Hessian troops to guard the British shores.

Fox, not liking his commission, with Newcastle intractable and Pitt for ever on his flank ready to attack, tendered his resignation. Granville was called upon to negotiate. He saw the King, and found him equally anxious to get rid of Fox and keep free from Pitt. Fox was surly, and told Granville of his disgust ; for consolation he received the counsel already quoted : ' Fox, I don't love to have you say things that will not be believed. If you was of my age [sixty-six], very well ; but I have put on my nightcap ; there is no more daylight for me : but you should be ambitious.'

Fox resigned. Pitt was tired of negotiations ; he was not going to be bothered by more of Newcastle's trepidation ; he would bide his time. Once more Newcastle implored Granville to assume the leadership, and again he refused. The thanes were flying from him, and, although his dominion had not been won by foul methods, he found the power upon which he had laid covetous hands crumbling in his grasp. He could no longer conceal his defeat ; on November 11th, 1756, he resigned.

The movement of forces which followed this disintegra-

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tion concerns Granville only to the extent that he was once more employed as the negotiator between the King and his servants. To first office he himself, of course, made no pretence. The solution of the difficulty was that Pitt agreed to serve under the nominal leadership of the Duke of Devonshire. Granville remained where he was, but his office was by no means a sinecure. The King and Pitt were quickly at issue, and Granville had to make fruitless efforts to keep the peace.

In April 1757, Pitt was dismissed by the King ; then followed prolonged confusion, futile overtures, insecure professions. Finally, Granville found himself sitting once more in council with Newcastle for a leader and Pitt for a colleague. The humour of it may well have pleased his easy temper ; the irony of it doubtless embittered the arbitrary passions of the King. So well accustomed had Granville become to quick and startling changes that he appears to have treated his Cabinet duties as a joke. His favourite object for jest was Hardwicke, Newcastle's old crony, never a friendly influence to himself. Before the shifts and changes had carried them so far as this, he had made the following extraordinary contribution to the study of national politics : ' I am thinking that all over Europe they are waiting our determination and canvassing our characters. The Duke of Newcastle, they'll say, is a man of great fortune, who has spent a great deal of it in support of the present family. Fox, they'll say, is an impudent fellow, who has fought his way here through the House of Commons ; as for me, they know me throughout Europe, they know my talents and my character ; but I am thinking they will be

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asking, "Qui est ce diable de Chancelier ? How came he here ?" '*

Changes followed fast. King George II. died in 1760. With his grandson's accession there arose the transitory light of Bute's ascendancy. Throughout the ebb and flow of rivalry and intrigue, Granville stood serene. He had no motive for jealousy, and he could appreciate good work. To Pitt, on April 5th, 1761, he wrote : ' When this great affair comes out into the world, every person of candour will agree to impute the happy setting out of this great affair, as well as the success of it, which God grant, to the right author, whose spirit, and perseverance, and judgment, under some discouragements, to my own knowledge, have produced this salutary work.'

Pitt now saw that Spain was preparing to join France in attack upon England, and he determined to anticipate the danger by striking first and paralysing her ; but to this daring scheme he found that his colleagues were opposed. It is not easy to be sure what was Granville's settled purpose from this point to the end. Did he ally himself with the rest of the Cabinet in opposing a war policy, or did he support Pitt in the spirit of his recent letter ? Carlyle, for one, laments that his old favourite should have made a poor-spirited ending. Lord Stanhope, as usual, gives an adverse verdict. He quotes the speech which follows, and adds, ' These expressions . . . are reported in the *Annual Register* ; . . . neither Granville nor Pitt ever denied their authenticity . . . Burke, who supplied

* Here is another example of Granville's Cabinet manner : ' Lord Granville did not treat the affair quite so seriously—told three or four very good stories, which were nothing to the purpose. . . . ' *Waldegrave*.

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them—being then private secretary to the Secretary for Ireland—had excellent means of information.’

‘I find the gentleman is determined to leave us,’ so runs the speech, ‘nor can I say I am sorry for it, since otherwise he would certainly have compelled us to leave him. But if he is resolved to assume the office of exclusively advising his Majesty and directing the operations of the war, to what purpose are we called in Council? When he talks of being responsible to the people, he talks the language of the House of Commons, and forgets that at this Board he is responsible only to the King’

Granville’s biographer, of course, undertakes a rebutting case. He asserts that Granville repeatedly denied the genuineness of the report; and he quotes from *A Review of Lord Bute’s Administration* (1763) a distinct avowal that the speech was composed by ‘those ministerial tools [supporters of Bute] already refuted.’ He protests that Granville was guilty of no word or action inconsistent with the spirit of the letter of April 5th. But whether his support was emphatic or conditional, it was not powerful enough to save Pitt. His colleagues failed him and he resigned. This was in October 1761, and early in the following year the Government were forced to declare war with Spain. Bute was already Secretary of State; he relied on the support of the King and his mother. Newcastle must be made to feel the falseness of his position: so many slights were put upon him, and so deliberately was his authority flouted, that in May 1762 he resigned, and Bute was promoted to fill his place. Then the peace policy prevailed, and the new Minister

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succeeded in concluding the Peace of Paris before consciousness of his unpopularity drove him to resign in 1763.

Pitt opposed the peace in one of his dramatic orations, but Mr. Ballantyne does not go to the length of representing Granville as taking his part. He would presumably wish to show that there was never any wavering in the fearlessness of Granville's patriotism or the tenacity of his purpose ; but in the absence of proof to the contrary we must assume that the fire was going out, and gave no sign of leaping again beside the more savage ardour that animated Pitt. So excellent and judicious an historian as Parkman, for instance, is satisfied that Granville offered him no encouragement and that he approved the peace. 'It has been the most glorious war and the most triumphant peace that England ever knew': these, says he, were the dying words of the old statesman.* For Granville was indeed dying. Before the signatures were formally attached to the document, he was dead (January 2nd, 1763). One of his last acts were to examine its provisions, delaying only to quote from Homer a noble and appropriate passage on the contemplation of death.† Westminster Abbey, it was decided, was the proper place of

* *Montcalm and Wolfe*. Lord Campbell, in his *Lives of the Chancellors*, goes so far as to say that Lord Granville, 'who had chiefly directed the negotiation and was expected to take the lead in defending the preliminaries. . . .'

† The story is told by Robert Wood, who waited upon Granville with the official papers. He was author of an 'Essay on the original genius and writings of Homer,' where he relates the incident in a footnote. He also observes that 'His Lordship was very partial to the subject [Greek], and I seldom had the honour of receiving his commands on business that he did not lead the conversation to Greece and Homer.' Wood is presumably the authority for the words quoted by Parkman and others, but in his version the peace is 'honourable' not 'triumphant'—another anticipation of our 'peace with honour.'

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burial for such a man, and there he was laid amongst those whom England has chosen for permanent honour and memorial.

III.

At the beginning of this chapter, there were given some specimens of contemporary criticism on Granville's character and abilities. It remains now to fill up the outline and endeavour to make some picture of the man in private life. 'When he dies, the ablest head in England dies too, take it for all in all.' So said Chesterfield, who was not his constant friend, but who was not strongly prejudiced. Here is what he said in his published 'Characters': 'Lord Granville had great parts, and a most uncommon share of learning for a man of quality. He was one of the best speakers in the House of Lords, both in the declamatory and argumentative way. He had a wonderful quickness and precision in seizing the stress of a question, which no art, no sophistry, could disguise to him. In business he was bold, enterprising, and overbearing. He had been bred up in the high monarchical, that is tyrannical principles of Government, which his ardent and imperious temper made him think were the only rational and practicable ones. He would have been a great first minister of France, little inferior, perhaps, to Richelieu; in this government, which is yet free, he would have been a dangerous one, little less so, perhaps, than Lord Strafford. He was neither ill-natured nor vindictive, and had a great contempt for money. His ideas were all above it. In social life, he was an agreeable, good-humoured, and instructive companion; a great but entertaining talker.

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‘He degraded himself by the vice of drinking, which, together with a great stock of Greek and Latin, he brought away with him from Oxford, and retained and practised ever afterwards. By his own industry he had made himself master of all modern languages, and had acquired a great knowledge of the law. His political knowledge of the interest of Princes and of commerce was extensive, and his notions were just and great. His character may be summed up, in nice precision, quick decision, and unbounded presumption.’

This deliberate judgment is the more valuable in contrast with the bitter taunts and denunciations which Chesterfield had levelled against Carteret in moments of political anger. In one letter to Marchmont he speaks of ‘the drunken promise of a wild and drunken minister’: again, soon after friendship had suffered estrangement, he ascribed to his ally ‘the zeal and heart of a convert, or an apostate, which you please, if a man can be called either who has no religion at all.’ In 1746, he wrote to Newcastle that ‘good policy, still more than resentment, requires that Granville and Bath should be marked out, and all their people cut off.’ Finally, we have this attack, made in Parliament in 1743, which is manifestly an outburst of personal spite. Contemporary testimony, and the evidence of facts combine to assure us that the accusation of avarice was, at all events, unsubstantiated ribaldry: ‘A man who, when in Opposition, even his sincerity could never beget confidence, nor his abilities esteem; whose learning is unrewarded with knowledge, and his experience with wisdom; discovering a haughtiness of demeanour, without any dignity of character; and possess-

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ing the lust of avarice, without knowing the right uses of power and riches. His understanding blinded by his passions, his passions directed by his prejudices, and his prejudices ever hurrying into presumption ; impatient even of an equal, yet ever requiring the correction of a superior. Right as to general maxims, but wrong in the application ; and therefore always so intoxicated by the prospect of success, that he never is cool enough to concert the proper measures to attain it.'

It was this 'mastery of all modern languages,' allowed by Chesterfield, that was one of the causes of jealousy in Granville's colleagues. When most of these gentlemen were confined to their vernacular, it was galling to behold him conversing easily in what was the only language of one king and the favourite language of another. And it must have provoked something more than the envy of admiration when, during the debate on General Anstruther's conduct as Governor of Minorca, Granville called in, according to Horace Walpole, 'a Minorchese and talked to him an hour in Spanish.'

According to Shelburne, Lord Granville was 'the best Greek scholar of the age, overflowing with wit, not so much a *discur de bons-mots*, as a man of true, comprehensive, ready wit.' Matthew Arnold, in taking notice of the death-bed quotation, says: 'I quote this story, first, because it is interesting as exhibiting the English aristocracy at its very height of culture, lofty spirit, and greatness, towards the middle of the eighteenth century.'

Spence, in his 'Anecdotes,' preserves the improbable legend that Carteret was anxious to meet Pope, and that, having accomplished his desire, he spent two hours

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debating whether Cicero or Kikero were right, and how the first verse of the 'Æneid' should be pronounced. The origin, if not the consequence, of this alleged extravagance is to be found in the couplet from the 'Dunciad':

To sound or sink in Cano, O or A.
Or give up Cicero to C or K.

Whether Pope really regarded him as a trifler or not need not concern us too much. There is ample evidence that he was held in esteem as a man of letters at various times by such high authorities as Addison, Voltaire, Gibbon, Swift, and Gay.

Here are Speaker Onslow's remarks upon the characters of Bolingbroke and Granville: 'They were universally esteemed of the greatest genius for parts and knowledge of any men of the age; the latter [Carteret] thought to be the better scholar, and to have formed his eloquence more upon the ancients, and to have more of their spirit in it, than the former; but the first was far the better writer, and had been a very lively and able speaker in both houses of Parliament. He was thought too to have more knowledge and skill in the affairs of Europe from his long experience abroad, and intimacy there with men of the first rank for business and capacity. But neither of them were thought to know enough of the real temper and constitution of their own country, although Lord Bolingbroke wrote much on that subject; they were both of them of unbounded spirit and ambition, impatient of restraint, contemning the notion of equality with others in business, and even disdaining to be anything if not the first and highest in power, They were not famed for

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what is called personal courage, but in the conduct of affairs were deemed bold, if not rash, and the Lord Bolingbroke was of a temper to overturn kingdoms to make way for himself and his talents to govern the world; whilst the other, in projecting the plans of his administration, thought much more of raising a great name to himself all over Europe, and having that continued by historians to all posterity, than of any present domestic popularity or renown whatsoever. . . . They were both very incorrupt as to money. . . . Lord Carteret was all for glory, even to the enthusiasm of it . . . but Lord Bolingbroke's was merely power . . . in a word they were both made rather for the splendour of great monarchies than the sober counsels of a free state . . . upon the whole, Lord Carteret seemed much the better man and a safer minister than the other. It was at court [Walpole] feared him most, as the most likely person to supplant him with the King and Queen, who disliked Lord Carteret less than any of the others who carried on this opposition . . . chiefly because his politics made very much for the interests of Hanover, which he always laboured to unite with those of this country'—which is only another way of putting Horace Walpole's confession that Sir Robert 'loved power so much that he could not endure a rival.'

Speaker Onslow does not rank Granville very high as an orator, but against this we may put the very flattering tribute of Lord Chancellor King: 'Sir Robert Walpole was now (1726) in the zenith of his power, although not of his glory; for as yet he had not encountered in mortal strife Pulteney, Carteret, and Pitt.' We have few chances

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of studying his oratory, but this speech, on the occasion of negotiations with Spain in 1739, has been preserved: 'It is from commerce, my Lords, that I behold your Lordships within these walls, a free, an independent assembly; but should any considerations influence your Lordships to give so fatal a wound to the interest and honour of this kingdom as your agreeing to this Address, it is the last time I shall have occasion to trouble this House. For, my Lords, if we are to meet only to give a sanction to measures that overthrow all our rights, I should look upon it as a misfortune for me to be either accessory or witness to such a compliance. I will not only repeat what the merchants told your Lordships—that their trade is ruined; I will go further, I will say the nobility is ruined; the whole nation is undone. For I can call this treaty nothing else but a mortgage of your honour, a surrender of your liberties.'

According to Pitt's biographer, Doctor Von Ruville, Granville was not a natural politician; he 'was a straightforward, unconcerned optimist, careless of intrigue, ignorant of hypocrisy.' This is an eloquent tribute, and should count for much, seeing that Pitt and Granville were not always in accord; but it must not be forgotten that his colleagues specially complained of his habits of secrecy and intrigue. Walpole averred that it was Granville's private assurances of support to Austria, in 1741, that wrecked his own peace policy. Lord Marchmont has recorded that the Prussian envoy complained that Carteret, as he then was, had been using different language to himself from that which he had addressed to the envoy of the Emperor. The Emperor had revealed this duplicity to the King of Prussia, who 'said it was agreeable to the rest of Carteret's conduct.'

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We may conclude that Carteret's theory of responsibility for foreign affairs did not preclude him from seeking means and ends without regard to the sentiments of his colleagues, and that to this extent he was perhaps 'ignorant of hypocrisy,' but only 'careless of intrigue' in the sense that he did not hamper himself with tender scruples. How savagely his independence was resented by his colleagues may be gathered from this letter written by Newcastle to Hardwicke in 1743: 'Lord Carteret has, in my humble opinion, made all his measures, and all his advice, subservient to the only point of making court to the King, by flattering his Majesty in his electoral views and partialities. . . . The further conduct of Lord Carteret will show that he has had no other view in carrying on the war for the Queen of Hungary, but as it served, or not, his own present private purposes, and that, if the war is now become impracticable to be carried on, it is simply owing to Lord Carteret's management of it, and not to the measure itself.'

Newcastle complained that Carteret's sole object was to make court to the King, and all that we read undoubtedly suggests that at the time of this lament, and onwards, he stood well at the Court. It comes as a surprise, therefore, to find Bolingbroke telling Marchmont, in 1744, that 'Carteret had done all he could to get his lady into the King's Saturday parties of diversion at Richmond, but in vain; for the King had made a jest of it, and laughed it off.' The simplest explanation is, perhaps, the true one, that Bolingbroke was romancing for a private reason. If it were true, Carteret probably made a jest of it likewise, and laughed it off; for he was a man of easy temper, and, much as he cared for great affairs of State, he is seldom

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found worrying over trifles, and was even capable of indifference to important business. On the eve of the marriage of his daughter Georgiana he had to confess that he had made no provision for her dowry, and gaily accepted the loan of 5000*l.* which his father-in-law felt obliged to offer. He thought nothing of having importunate creditors in the house, and treated them so civilly that they were constrained to patience and indulgence. Stoutly as he withstood Walpole's policy he was free from personal vindictiveness; he opposed the Bill of Indemnity, which was to protect all witnesses against the Minister after his fall. Nor was Walpole blind to his good qualities. He told his son Horace that in 1721 the Cabinet had decided to arrest Lord North on the charge of complicity with the Jacobites; that Carteret, who had lately become Secretary of State, allowed his good nature to overcome his official scruples, and galloped down to Epping Forest to warn him. Once in the midst of some angry recriminations in the House of Lords, Granville exclaimed, in bland astonishment, 'Poor Aylesford is really angry!' He was not incapable of a severe indignation when his grand schemes were thwarted; in smaller matters he preserved a sweet serenity. Lord Stanhope ranks him low, mainly on the score of indolence: 'Carteret,' says he, 'neither fills, nor deserves to fill, a very high niche in the temple of fame. . . . He would be all fire to-day, all ice to-morrow. . . . A careless, lolling, laughing love of self; a sort of Epicurean ease, roused to action by starts and bounds—such was his real character. . . . He may dazzle as he passes, but cannot bear a close and continuous gaze.'

Carteret had no Boswell and no son Horace. He must

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surely have been careless of popularity : otherwise we must have been better informed of his private life and habits. We know already that he married, in 1710, Frances Worsley, whose mother was daughter of the first Viscount Weymouth. By this marriage he had seven children. Two boys died young ; his third son succeeded him in the earldom, but died unmarried in 1776, so that the title became extinct. And he had four daughters. Grace married the Earl of Dysart ; Louisa married Viscount Weymouth ; Georgiana married, first, the Hon. John Spencer, brother of the third Duke of Marlborough, and, secondly, Earl Cowper ; Francis married the Marquis of Tweeddale.

The first Lady Carteret left no trace upon the history of her time, but she must have been a sensible woman and a good wife. The gossips had no ill-natured stories to tell of her : her mother-in-law was inclined to be critical, but her familiar title of 'the dragon' implies a natural austerity. According to her, Lady Carteret was too much given to talking and fine dressing. Carteret, at all events, was contented ; and their marriage was one of happiness. If the wife had worldly leanings, she must, at all events, have found satisfaction in the matches made by her three elder daughters. Granville himself seems not to have been ambitious. His advice on the subject of marriage to his grandson, Lord Dysart, was 'to choose a gentlewoman and please himself.' The youngest daughter was to take still higher rank and become Marchioness of Tweeddale,* but that the mother was not spared to see. In 1743 she was

* A portrait at Yester represents her as a red-haired young lady of no remarkable beauty. It is by Allan Ramsay, and is chiefly to be admired for the painting of her white satin gown.

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abroad with her husband. At Hanover she fell ill. Carteret was on the point of setting out with the King to join the army, and she urged him to make no alteration of plans on her account; she was not ill enough for that. He departed, destined to witness the battle of Dettingen, but to see her alive no more. She died in June.

Carteret's sorrow was no doubt unfeigned: perhaps it was not in his nature to manifest deep anguish. However, the sympathy of contemporaries was quickly at an end, and the approbation of readers now may be withheld. Carteret immediately set about marrying again. Rumour had already provided him with a bride, but he surprised everybody by selecting Lady Sophia Fermor, daughter of the Earl and Countess of Pomfret. Lady Pomfret was a woman of some character, though not of a brilliant kind. She was descended from Judge Jeffreys. In 1720 she married Thomas Fermor, Lord Lempster, who before long became Earl of Pomfret and Master of the House to Queen Caroline. It was rumoured at the time that he had cleared his way by a gift of some diamond earrings to Mrs. Clayton (Lady Sundon), and it was in this connection that Lady Mary Wortley Montagu is supposed to have excused the parade of the bribe by asking, 'How are people to know where wine is to be sold if she does not hang out a sign?' Lady Pomfret became a Lady of the Bedchamber, but she retired from Court in 1737, when the Queen died, and the family went to live in Italy. The author of *Little Memoirs of the Eighteenth Century** made an appropriate choice when he selected her for biography. She made enough mark to deserve notice; she has no claim to be ranked

* By George Paston.

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with eminent persons. She set up as a wit, but her efforts at facetiousness were almost imbecile. Her intelligence may be gauged by the fact that when it was said of some convivial gentleman that he 'talked nothing but Madeira,' she asked what language that was; and, under pressure, proceeded to argue that inasmuch as Madeira was subject to a European prince, the inhabitants must surely talk some European language. She aspired to be a letter-writer, perhaps to rival Horace Walpole and Lady Mary, and laboured conscientiously at her correspondence with Lady Hertford; but she had no spirit, and was capable only of gush. She was, in fact, a *précieuse* of an aggravated kind. Horace Walpole saw the humour of her, and filled his letters with sarcasms at her expense; but, whatever her own shortcomings might have been, her daughter Sophia was a beautiful girl. In Florence they had for some time held their little court, and there it was expected that Lady Sophia would become engaged to Lord Lincoln, the son of Newcastle's and Pelham's sister Lucy. Carteret's biographer says that the Duke of Newcastle insisted on Lincoln marrying Henry Pelham's daughter. Lady Pomfret's biographer declares that Lincoln ran away from the net cast to ensnare him, and married his cousin to please himself. However that may be, the young beauty had evidently been eager. 'Lady Sophia Fermor is at the last gasp of her hopes,' wrote Horace Walpole. She was left disconsolate and single. 'Tis quite impossible,' wrote Lady Mary, 'she should not command what matches she pleases when such pugs as Miss Hamilton [Lady Brooke] became peeresses.' In 1744 the family came to London. Lady Sophia at once rose to favour as a beauty, and

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ascended to fame by becoming engaged to Carteret, now fifty-four years old. 'Lincoln is quite indifferent, and laughs,' Horace Walpole reports. 'My Lord Chesterfield says, "It is only another of Carteret's vigorous measures."' Lady Mary Wortley Montagu approved for one. 'I am very well acquainted with Lady Sophia Fermor, having lived two months in the same house with her. She has few equals in beauty or graces. I shall never be surprised at her conquests. If Lord Carteret has the design you seem to think, he could not make a more proper choice.'

The marriage took place on April 14th, 1744, and the society of the day became deeply interested in the sequel. Horace Walpole followed it with close attention. Amongst other things he records an epigram upon the exchange of Lincoln for Carteret :—

Here beauty, like the Scripture feast,
To which the invited never came,
Deprived of its intended guest,
Was given to the halt and lame.

This seems to corroborate the assertion that Lincoln ran away from Lady Pomfret's designs. It is alleged that Horace had himself been a suitor for Lady Sophia, and had been abruptly snubbed by the mother, which would account for his malice as a chronicler. But he is not unusually malignant in his observations in this case: moreover, there is other authority for the assertion that his admiration, such as it was, had been bestowed upon another sister, Lady Charlotte.

Carteret certainly invited attention, and gave occasion for gossip. It is on record that he read his love-letters aloud at Cabinet Councils. In public places he made

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an excessive display of his amorous excitement. Lady Carteret was well pleased. She was fully disposed to play the part of a great lady. In October she became Countess Granville: in the next month her husband was driven from office by the Pelhams; but she showed no signs of yielding. On the night of his resignation she appeared in full splendour at an oratorio; and she continued to hold her receptions, which had hitherto been official. Horace Walpole attended them, and says he found 'nothing but the Winchilseas' (Finches) 'and Baths, and the gleanings of a party stuffed out into a faction, and the whole blood of Fermor.' In spite of his sneers, he has to add that 'the great present disturbance in politics is my Lady Granville's assemblies, which, I do assure you, distresses the Pelhams infinitely more than a mysterious meeting of the States would. . . . His house is very fine, she very handsome, her lord very agreeable and extraordinary; and yet the Duke of Newcastle wonders that people will go thither. He mentioned to my father my going there, who laughed at him. . . .'

But Lady Granville's reign was to be cut short. In October 1745 she suffered from a fever, her daughter was born, and she died when the doctors had declared her out of danger. The child grew up to become the wife of Lord Shelburne, first Marquis of Lansdowne. In 1753 there was a rumour that Granville contemplated a third marriage, with Lady Juliana Collier, daughter of the Earl of Portmore, but there is no evidence that this was true beyond Horace Walpole's interminable gossip; and he remained a widower.

It has been said that there are no available records of

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Lord Granville's private life, and no means of drawing his portrait beyond the guidance afforded by his official correspondence and the comments of colleagues and opponents. By the kindness, however, of Lady Sudeley, the grand-daughter of the great-grandson of Grace Carteret, Countess of Dysart, I have been permitted to see some letters which go far to remedy this defect. Granville has been represented here as an easy-going man, given to friendliness and kindly disposed towards his neighbours. These letters show that he suffered fools gladly, and maintained an amiable understanding with his mother-in-law, Lady Pomfret; also that he was fondly attached to his little daughter, and was always glad to give pleasure to his sisters-in-law. Of these there were five: Charlotte, who was afterwards governess to the children of George III. and married William Finch; Henrietta, who married Conyers of Copthall; Juliana, who married Thomas Penn, one of the proprietors of Pennsylvania; Louisa, who married William Clayton; and Anne, who married Thomas Dawson.

Charlotte was his favourite. Horace Walpole wrote as a piece of gossip: 'Lord Granville, who is extremely fond of Lady Charlotte, has given her all her sister's [Lady Granville's] jewels, to the great discontent of his own daughters.' Finch was a widower, brother of the seventh, and father, by Lady Charlotte, of the eighth Lord Winchilsea; he had been employed on a diplomatic mission to Sweden, and was a Privy Councillor. He belonged to a family known, by reason of their sallow complexions, as the 'black Finch's'; known also as a family devoted to Granville's interests, which, as we know, were by no means fashionable in politics.

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Granville was living at Hawnes, in Bedfordshire; the Pomfrets were at Easton Neston, near Towcester, and there the child Sophia, of whom he always speaks as Lady Sophia, was being brought up. There are constant allusions in his letters to Madame Vernason and Miss Shelley. The former was, no doubt, the governess. Of the other lady we hear something from Horace Walpole, who relates that Lady Pomfret had made a scene in the House of Lords by insisting upon introducing 'Miss Shelley, her bosom friend,' where none but peeresses had a right to go. Miss Shelley apparently had a liking for small beer, and her taste is never forgotten. In an undated letter he writes: 'I have an old chair of my mothers in which she [Sophia] may roll round y^e garden when y^e weather is good. . . . I beg leave to assure Miss Shelley she will have admirable small bear (*sic*) here.' In another he gives a general invitation with this explanation: 'I shall be very much mortified if you do not bring Lady Julian, Lady Louisa, and Lady Anne with you, besides Miss Shelley and Lady Sophia . . . as Lady Sophia leaves a very fine place for an indifferent one, I would have her surrounded here with y^e same company, y^t she may be less sensible of y^e change when she sees Her Aunts with Her.' Also because it is Lady Julian's last chance of paying a visit before her marriage. In a previous letter he had written: 'I was asked at Court by several great people whether Lady Julian was to be married to Lord Northampton. I said I wished it; and it is a report at present all over y^e Town.' His invitations were not empty forms of civility, and he took pains to make them tempting, as this letter serves to show:—

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TO LADY POMFRET.

‘Hawnes, Sept. 28th, 1748.

‘MADAM,—This will be delivered to y^r L^p by My Coachman, who is to set out to-morrow for Towcester with four horses, and a Postillion, to wait y^r commands. Y^r L^p knows y^t my equipage is kept by y^e year, upon hire, so there is no reason y^t they shou’d trouble Easton. I should have sent my Coach with six horses, but y^e Ladys y^t were here, told me, y^t you had occasion only for a pair of horses; I send four, y^t if 2 shou’d fall lame, you may still have a set. I am vastly impatient for y^e honour of seeing you, & y^e dear Child, w^{ch} according to y^r L^p appointment, is to be Saturday next, I reckon about 4 a clock upon y^t honour; dinner shall be ready by y^t time; Minced Chicken shall be ready for Lady Sophia, in a moment after her arrival, & another ready to be roasted, upon y^e spit, it can stay a quarter of an hour for her dinner. I have excellent small beer for Miss Shelley, & very good mutton & chicken for y^r L^p, & if My L^d pleases to come, I can get him a foreign dressed dish, my Cook, useless upon other occasions, being here; to make a Ragoust, or a fricassee, which I don’t eat or taste.

‘I hope y^e young Ladys got home well and in good time, I was extremely pleas’d to see y^m & very sorry to part with y^m so soon, but y^r orders were to be obey’d. Mrs. —* has taken great care y^t y^e beds are well aired, so I flatter myselfe y^t y^r L^p will find no inconvenience here, wood is layd in all y^e chimneys so we can have what fires we please. . . . My duty

* Illegible. Doubtless his housekeeper.

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to my Lord, compliments to Miss Shelley, who will like my improvements here. My blessing to Lady Sophia, & I am Madam ever with y^e greatest affection & respect

‘Y^r L^{ps} most dutifull Son

‘& ob^{dt} humble servant

‘GRANVILLE.

‘The Marquess & Marchioness* send their most respectful compliments. The charming young Ladys, I suppose, will have left Easton before you receive this, otherwise my sincere respects & thanks to you for y^e honour they did me.

‘Wednesday even 8 a clock Sept. 28th.’

Lord Granville appears to have got on so well with his mother-in-law, or at least to have been so anxious to stand well with her, that in one letter he says: ‘I think aloud with y^r L^p,’ which, from a very clever man to a notoriously foolish woman, comes near to a confession of flattery; but his sense of obligation was undoubtedly sincere. He is ‘infinitely indebted to’ (all the family) ‘for their goodness to my Daughter.’ ‘My blessing to my dearest little child,’ and his incessant messages to ‘dear Lady Sophia,’ are always accompanied by affectionate tributes to his sisters-in-law as well as Madame Vernason and Miss Shelley. Incidentally he sends a canister of Russian tea in exchange for a present of a cheese. In 1750 there seems to have been a grand entertainment at Windsor. The occasion is not obvious, unless it were in honour of the birth of the Prince of Wales’s son, Frederick, who lived only until his fifteenth year. Granville writes:—

* Of Tweeddale.

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TO LADY POMFRET.

'Arlington Street, June 21, 1750.

'MADAM,—I return y^r L^p my most dutifull thanks, for y^e honor of y^r most obliging letter, of y^e 19th, as also for y^r consideration to accept a lodging in Windsor Town, for otherwise your L^p and your company cannot see y^e ceremony wth any convenience; y^e Ball I take to be y^e principal entertainment in which y^r daughters will make so good a figure, y^t I take it a great honor to mysele, to have such Sisters; however I cant consent y^t Lady Charlotte shou'd be there, all y^e others I hope to see; and will take all imaginable care, y^t y^r L^p and company shall be provided with everything, y^t y^e place can furnish. My compliments to Miss Shelley and Mad^{selle} Vernason, who I hope will both dance. I know nothing yet of certainty, as to y^e day, it cannot be before y^e 12th, but may possibly be postponed for a week. Some things still remaining to be settled concerning Prince George.* Lord Pomfret at y^e request of several of his friends has put off his journey for a day, on account of our Anniversary Billingsgate dinner, w^{ch} we are to have to-morrow; from whence he intends to set out for Chorley Wood. Y^r L^p may wonder at this, but our meeting is solemn, & we shall have much Sea fish, as I wish you could have at Easton for Mad^{selle} Vernason. My blessing to Lady Sophia, & I thank her for her intention to dance, but I think she had better jump about at Easton that day, in remembrance of us, yⁿ in y^e crowd at Windsor, but I submit y^t to you. I will certainly wait upon y^r L^p at Easton before, or after y^e ceremony. I desire my most

* Then aged 12.

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sincere & affectionate respects to L^r Louisa and L^r Anne, whom I hope to see at y^e Ball.

‘I shall not trouble y^r L^p further at present yⁿ to assure you, y^t I am with inviolable duty & respect Madam y^r L^{ps}

‘Most affectionate Son and most
obedt hum^{ble} ser^{vt},

‘GRANVILLE.

‘I shall write to y^r L^p
y^e moment I hear y^e day is fixed.’

‘*Arlington Street, July 5th, 1750.*

‘MADAM,—I had y^e honor of y^r L^{ps} for w^{ch} I return my most dutiful thanks. I sent Pichell yesterday to Windsor, to see y^e Dean of Worcesters 2 houses, one in y^e Town, & y^e other in y^e Cloisters. I have fixed upon y^t in y^e Cloisters; w^{ch} is larger and more convenient yⁿ y^e other. In y^t of y^e cloisters, there are six good bed chambers, and it is very near y^e Chapple, so if it should rain no inconveniency can happen, and you need not be troubled for chairs, or coaches to go to y^e Ball. Dr. Wilmot’s house where I lodge is in y^e Cloisters very near, so I can wait upon y^r L^p under cover.

‘I shall send down to-morrow, sheets, &c., and table linen, and Pichell shall go on Monday to see all is in order, for y^r arrival, & shall stay there till we quit y^e Houses, I intend to be there on Wednesday night, to be ready next day, for y^e ceremony, and I think it will be convenient for y^r L^p to be there likewise on y^e Wednesday night. If six beds are not enough, I can add more, and there shall be what is necessary for y^r company.

‘I received yesterday y^e King’s summons to repair to Windsor Castle, and everybody is in a great hurry against

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y^e 12th, no lodging to be got in Windsor, but as I hope to see y^r L^p on Monday night in London according to y^r letter, I shall yⁿ settle matters further with you. I hope Mr. Conyeirs and Lady Harriot* will come, if she is in a condition for a Ball, and if Lady Sophia had got over y^e small pox, she might have been there, but y^t is y^e reason I excepted Lady Charlotte Finch's coming. The Duke of Grafton and I dined at Chorley Wood on Monday where we were nobly entertained, I there beg'd Lady Julia to grace y^e Ball, she said she had no orders from y^r L^p, for y^e purpose, I said I would write to you ; for y^e hopes of y^e appearance of y^r Family, was my inducement to come into y^e ordering a Ball ; at w^{ch} I should not appear, unless all my Sisters were there ; and yⁿ no brother Knight could bring brighter company. As y^r L^p proposes to be in Town Monday night, I desire y^r L^p and y^r company will do me y^e honor to dine wth me on Tuesday, on Wednesday I shall set out for Windsor. My blessing to L^y Sophia if she will write me a letter I will answer. My compliments to my sisters whom I hope to see at dinner on Tuesday as well as Miss Shelley and Mad^{selle} Vernason, to whom I beg my respects as well as to my L^d Pomfret. I am ever Madam with y^e greatest truth and respect y^r L^{ps}

‘ Most dutifull Son and
most obedt humb^{ble} serv^{nt}

‘ GRANVILLE.

‘ I intend to make Mad^{selle}
Vernasson a present of a Gold
Snuff-box, when she comes to Town ;
but I w^d have it appear as a present from L^y Sophia ; and

* Lady Henrietta Conyers.

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therefore if she writes to me a scrawl ; I shall say it is her order ; and I wish y^r L^p w^d make y^e dear Creature tell Mad^{sell} Veⁿ, y^t she has ordered me to deliver to her her *petit present en reconnoissance de ses bontés pour elle.*

These letters suggest one or two observations. The address was celebrated by Horace Walpole, who wrote to Lady Ossory in 1782 : ‘ Oh ! I have got a good omen that tells me Lord Shelburn will be minister—premiers always live where I do. In Arlington Street, my father, Lord Granville, Mr. Pelham, the Duke of Grafton.’ This at all events justifies us in including Granville amongst the Prime Ministers of England. It is to be regretted that the spirit of prophecy was not as fully developed in Horace as the genius for gossip : had this been so he might have added another name as worthy to be honoured as the greatest of these. The allusion to small-pox is worth noting. This disease was the bane of Court beauties, and familiarity can never have mitigated the dread which it inspired. William III. had been attacked as a young man and never entirely recovered the damage done to his constitution. Queen Mary had died of small-pox. Since then it had spared the royal family, but in all ranks of society it remained as irrepressible as influenza is with us. Our own annals may perhaps cause posterity to wonder how we came to endure with apparent resignation a constant source of suffering and an occasional cause of death. Until medical science has gone a little further we must endure the lesser evil as our ancestors put up with the greater. How bad that evil was we can appreciate when we find so good-natured a man as Granville refusing to take his favourite sister-in-law to a ball

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because she was no longer fit to be seen. It is improbable that fear of infection deterred him : there would surely have been no question of her going under such suspicion. Even more shocking is it to learn that the child of six had been attacked. There is nothing more to tell us of this, nor do we know whether she was permanently disfigured, but the two cases reveal very clearly how grave an element the risk of infection was in domestic life—a fact which did not escape the notice of so consummate an observer as the author of *Esmond*.

In this amiable tone the letters are consistent. Granville writes sometimes from Chorley Wood, where he is staying with the Finch's ; sometimes he is the guest of the Conyers at Copthall or, as he spells it Copt Hall ; and whatever judgment we are able to form of Granville as a statesman, we may surely conceive a liking for him on the fragmentary evidence of his private character. And with this pleasant testimony in his favour we may take our leave.

**WALPOLE:
THE PEACE MINISTER**

WALPOLE: THE PEACE MINISTER

ROBERT WALPOLE was the third son of Sir Robert Walpole, of Houghton, in Norfolk. His biographer provides him with an ancestry reaching to a respectable origin in Reginald de Walpole, 'time of the Conqueror.' The date of his birth has always been a matter of doubt, but 1676 has been generally accepted. His second brother died in 1690; the eldest in 1698, and Robert, who had been intended for the career of a clergyman, became heir to a landed property. A younger brother was Horace, the diplomatist; by no means to be mistaken for Robert's son, Horace, the letter writer.

The legend is told that Robert Walpole once declared that if he had not become Prime Minister his destiny would have made him Archbishop of Canterbury. He probably never said it, and the alternative appears far less probable than in the case of another Prime Minister, who was diverted from the Church to politics—Mr. Gladstone.

How far Walpole had advanced in grace during his student days cannot be surely known, but such principles and convictions as he may have possessed were easily and entirely obliterated. His father was content that he should be a market-going, fox-hunting, claret-drinking, bookless countryman. He taught Robert to drink in order that he

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himself might not cut an unseemly figure in the eyes of a sober son. The character of the table talk at Houghton may be gathered from the fact that Robert, in later days, said he always encouraged indecent conversation because it put every man at his ease. 'Everybody agrees that he was coarse in his conversation,' said Lord Shelburne, 'particularly about women, scouting all sentiment and sentimental love.' He was never at pains to address his countrymen upon Church or Religion. In his early days he was so far from being a zealot that he acted as teller (1704) against the Bill for preventing occasional conformity : and the incident is worth noticing, because after the measure had passed the House of Commons and been rejected by the House of Lords a proposal was made to tack it on to a Money Bill, so that the Peers should not dare to tamper with it again.

Walpole's biographer says that his heart was hardened and his disposition to toleration modified by the Sacheverell proceedings. It is perhaps nearer truth to say that his prejudices were excited by his growing habit of perceiving in every Roman Catholic and non-juror, a Jacobite conspirator. At all events we are left without any striking manifestation of his concern in spiritual matters, and we can hardly bring ourselves to see a potential Archbishop in the man who gave this advice to Princess Caroline, when her mother was dying, and it had been proposed that the actual Archbishop should be summoned : 'Pray, madam, let this farce be played . . . it will do the Queen no hurt . . . and will satisfy the wise and good fools who will call us atheists if we don't pretend to be as great fools as they are.' This contempt for the offices of the Church

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can have come from nothing but indifference and absence of religious instinct; it was certainly not the result of profound study. Swift called Walpole 'Bob, the poet's foe.' To set against this it has been urged that he sought the friendship of men of letters, including Addison, and gave appointments to Congreve and Gay; but it is beyond dispute that he once said to Fox, 'You can read. It is a great happiness. I totally neglected it when I was in business, which has been my whole life, and to such a degree that I cannot now read a page.' That he had neglected his education is proved by the fact that he never acquired any facility for speaking a foreign language. This was a serious hindrance to him when he had to fight Carteret for mastery in the Hanoverian Court. Whilst his rival could converse at ease in German and French, Walpole had to content himself with faint recollections of his Eton grammar. When he was moved to refute with warmth the assertion of one of the Hanoverian ministers, he could do no better than blurt out 'Mentiris impudentissime.' At Eton and King's College, Cambridge, he had shown considerable, if not astonishing, abilities. At Cambridge he had been dangerously ill of 'collero morbus,' and his recovery was regarded as a sign that he was destined for a great career.

The period of estate-management that followed must be regarded as dead season, unless it be that he developed then the business capacity which must have been innate—'The best master of figures of any man of his time,' said Arthur Mainwaring.* In 1700 Walpole married Catherine, daughter of Sir John Shorter, Lord Mayor of London. She had

* This suggestion finds support in Ewald's *Life*.

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many of the qualities usually sought for in brides, beauty, charm, and wealth. Houghton was not a rich inheritance, and the last of these endowments was not the least important. That she should be an ally and adviser to her husband in public life was not in accordance with the times and not to be expected. That it was a union to be admired and envied by all who would be married, cannot be alleged. Nothing has been charged against the lady beyond a tendency to extravagance; but when she died after nearly forty years, she certainly did not leave Sir Robert broken and inconsolable. His preference for Maria Skerritt had long been a matter of common knowledge.

On the death of his father in 1700, Walpole entered Parliament as Member for Castle Rising; on the accession of Queen Anne, he exchanged this seat for Lynn Regis, which he represented as long as he remained in the House of Commons. He entered Parliament by no means a type of squire who was content to bring to London his taste for claret, and seek in that some consolation for his enforced abandonment of hunting: he had no idea of being a silent voter. His station and connections were respectable, but he was not one of the great ruling caste. He began with no advantages of elegance in tone or person. As an orator he was no rival to his old schoolfellow and life-long opponent, Bolingbroke; but one observer was shrewd enough to detect that in this case all that there was to admire was exhibited in precocious maturity, whereas Walpole possessed a latent and undeveloped power which would bear fruit in due season.

Walpole attached himself at once to the Whig Party, and made his first considerable mark during a debate upon a

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motion for the resumption of all grants made by King William. He urged that this was aimed only at the Whigs, and proposed to extend the provision to the grants of King James. He failed; but he was noticed, and the part he took in the Aylesbury Petition case which followed confirmed his reputation. The head of the Government was a Tory, Godolphin, Lord Treasurer: but Godolphin was in close touch with Marlborough, and Marlborough was predisposed in favour of Walpole, who was the friend of his son. Nor was Godolphin afraid of a Whiggish taint, and Walpole began a series of official appointments. In 1705 he was nominated to the council of Prince George of Denmark, Lord High Admiral. In 1708 he became Secretary at War: in 1709, Treasurer to the Navy. In 1710 Godolphin, to his own hindrance, insisted upon the impeachment of Sacheverell for his non-resistance sermon, and Walpole reluctantly undertook the duties of a manager. The trial brought discredit on the Government, and shortened their days. The Tory element had been gradually eliminated, and what had originally been a Tory administration had passed through a Tory-Whig transition into tolerably complete Whiggism. Now came the reaction: a general election restored the banished Tories, and Harley became the principal Minister. To Walpole he at once made overtures, which were rejected. He then began to hint at painful duties and awkward revelations. There were items in some of the public accounts which were difficult to explain, and might not be easy to defend. The long and short of it was that Walpole was accused of corruption, condemned by a party vote, and sent to the Tower, where he remained until the end of the session, July 1712.

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Whatever conclusion must be formed upon Walpole's probity and sense of financial honour, it may be said at once that this sentence attaches no stigma to his memory: it was an accident of fortune that might, as history shows, become the lot of any politician; only a move in the political game—as such it was intended, and as such it was undoubtedly recognised. The standard of morality in money matters prescribed for eighteenth century politicians was not as strict as the domestic perfection required of Cæsar's wife. A Paymaster who refused to turn his public duties to private advantage was considered as crazy as Don Quixote. To be in a public office and not to apply early intelligence to the movements of the Stock Exchange was to neglect one's duty to one's wife and family. As late as 1782 a stock-jobber was always in attendance at the Treasury to do commissions for any civil servant who might have picked up some useful piece of secret information. To pursue a delinquent in such matters according to the strict letter of the law was not unlike charging a modern Parliamentary candidate with corruption, because he may have given a piece of ribbon to an enthusiastic supporter. It was a technical offence to be held *in terrorem* and used on emergency.

Until the prorogation in the following year, Walpole was debarred from sitting in Parliament, but immediately after the general election he was back in his place, fulminating on many subjects, and especially advertising his alarm lest the Protestant succession should be imperilled by Queen Anne's secret sympathy with her brother. He opposed a peace policy and the foundation of the South Sea Company: he lived to recant his political principle, in

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the first case, and, no doubt, to repent his failure in the second.

Anne died in August 1714, and George I. reigned in her stead. Walpole's fears of a Jacobite coup were not fulfilled, but it does not follow that his suspicions were contemptible. Bishop Atterbury's blighted ambition has been noted. That there was much Jacobite sentiment astir is undoubted. It was not only secret and sincere, it was openly avowed, and to that extent perhaps the less dangerous. It is not difficult to show, and it has been plausibly shown, that there were present all the elements of a counter revolution, or of civil war; and that the sturdy loyalty to his Church which James had inherited from his father was the one serious impediment in the way of a general rising in his favour. On the other hand, the leaders themselves appear to have been very far from sanguine. Bolingbroke seldom committed himself irrevocably, and liked to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds as much as possible. Yet, in the event of a Jacobite reaction, he must surely have been forced into action on their side, and must have known the strength of their party: yet he declared afterwards, 'nothing is more certain than the truth that there was at this time no formed design in the party, whatever views some particular men might have against his Majesty's succession.' One ardent Jacobite would go no further than to say that whoever came to London first would be crowned: James, if he struck boldly and at once; if not, then George, no doubt. How far Bolingbroke's daring enterprises had been projected need not be debated; they were crushed by Somerset and Argyle, and the Whigs came back to power, and, as they

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supposed, to the rescue of the State. Townshend and Stanhope became Secretaries of State; Walpole was made Paymaster of the Forces outside the Cabinet, and presently Paymaster, also, of Chelsea Hospital.

In 1715 Walpole was called upon to impeach Bolingbroke. Sir Thomas Hanmer moved to add the name of Harley, Earl of Oxford. Bolingbroke fled, and was forthwith attainted. Oxford stood his trial, and was sent to the Tower. Thus Walpole anticipated the satisfaction which Lord Palmerston enjoyed a century and a half later, when he gave his 'tit for tat to John Russell.' But he need not be taxed with vindictiveness. He had not introduced Oxford's name; and he caused the charge of treason to be modified to high crime and misdemeanour. He never pursued Oxford for any purpose of revenge. Chesterfield amongst his contemporaries, and Burke in the next generation, acquitted him of malicious spirit. He was easy-going enough to ask Bolingbroke to dinner, when improving fortunes allowed him to revisit England. It is true that he was averse from allowing any clemency to the captured insurgents of 'the '15': 'he was moved to indignation,' he said, 'to see that there should be such unworthy members of this great body who can, without blushing, open their mouths in favour of rebels and parasites.' But it must be remembered that dread of a Stuart invasion was a real and constant torment that influenced his policy throughout life. It was not the malicious vengeance of a conqueror that moved him now; it was the fierce determination of a threatened man.

In October 1715 Walpole's position was so firmly established that he was promoted to be First Lord of

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the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Thus he reached the highest rank in his fortieth year. But he was not yet fixed in office. The King went to Hanover taking with him Sunderland and Stanhope. Then began the struggle for supremacy between these two ministers and the 'brothers'* at home. The King was assured that the latter, in his absence, were making overtures to the Prince of Wales inconsistent with perfect loyalty to their colleagues and their master. In vain the brothers protested: 'As for any secret intimacies or management undertaken,' wrote Walpole, 'if one instance can be given of it, call me for ever *villain*.' Townshend declared, 'I defy my Lord Sunderland to produce one single instance of my having made ill-use of the confidence with which his Royal Highness was pleased to honour me.' The King hated his son, and his suspicions hastened him into action. Townshend was dismissed from his office. In order that he might not be driven into active opposition, he was offered the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland. He declined: the King insisted; and Townshend yielded grudgingly. Before long a fresh accession of anger caused the King to deprive him of this office also. Then Walpole resigned. This was by no means what the King intended or desired, and he resisted him to the utmost, shedding tears and thrusting back the seals into his servant's hat. But Walpole meant to stand by his kinsman, and share in his adversity. The King was obliged to take him at his word, and the seals were transferred to Stanhope (1717).

Sunderland and Stanhope were not quite easy in their

* Townshend had married Walpole's sister Dorothy, as his second wife.

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minds. They had been bent on getting the upper hand in the control of affairs, but they were not prepared to have Townshend and Walpole in opposition: they went so far as to whisper that if they turned against the Government the King would be driven to abdicate his throne. Walpole retired undeterred, murmuring complacently that at all events he had endeavoured to serve his friends and relations as long as he had been in office—of which a word may be said presently. And he was not frightened out of his scheme of opposition. The ministers found in him a continual cause of trouble and perplexity. Especially tenacious was he in his hostility to their Peerage Bill, by means of which they flattered themselves they could make perpetual a Whig ascendancy in the House of Lords. The power of creation was to be strictly limited. Walpole was a sound Whig, but in the spacious atmosphere of opposition he was disposed to be a sound constitutionalist also. He opposed the measure in a speech which has been preserved in his own handwriting. That it was laboriously prepared may be inferred by the fact that it was liberally besprinkled with Latin quotations. ‘The view of the ministry in framing this Bill,’ said he, with awkward directness of attack, ‘is plainly nothing, but to secure their power in the House of Lords;’ and he developed his argument with relentless logic: ‘The strongest argument against the Bill is, that it will not only be a discouragement to virtue and merit, but would endanger our excellent constitution; for as there is a due balance between the three branches of the legislature, it will destroy that balance, and consequently subvert the whole constitution by causing one of the three powers,

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which are now dependent on each other, to preponderate in the scale. The Crown is dependent on the Commons by the power of granting money: the Commons are dependent on the Crown by the power of dissolution: the Lords will now be made independent of both.' The Bill was rejected by nearly a hundred votes.*

It had been one of the principal offences alleged against Walpole, to discredit him with the King, that he had been unduly intimate and capable of taking sides with the Prince of Wales. We have seen that he repudiated the charge. Now that he was in opposition it followed, as a matter of course, that he must be regarded as one of the Prince's friends; and to common advantage it was so. Sunderland was getting out of his depths, and felt constrained to seek a helping hand from his former colleagues. Walpole's aid was sought, and amongst the conditions of rescue was the demand that some effort should be made to reconcile the father and son. The scene at the christening, and the battle of the God-fathers had lately made matters worse: George I. was discussing the terms of a Bill for cutting his heir out of his German inheritance, and listening to Lord Berkeley's project for kidnapping him out of the country. Walpole regarded this situation as something more than a domestic scandal, and saw in it the possibilities of national calamity: he was determined to soothe the wound, if he could not heal it, and he did so far succeed that the Prince was induced to write a humble and contrite letter, which the

* Throughout the eighteenth century it was usual to speak of the three estates of the realm as King, Lords, and Commons. Mr. Lecky comments on this.

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King was pleased to accept with so many outward signs of peace that official marks of disgrace were removed and nominal harmony was restored. Walpole then became Paymaster-General, without a seat in the Cabinet, whilst Townshend was recalled and made Lord President.

This readiness to drop his critical character and embrace again the official life has been counted against Walpole for evil. He not only re-enlisted at once, but he accepted a subordinate place after having occupied one in the front rank. One critic goes so far as to say, 'how he managed to eat his own words, and belie his own actions by this miserable submission, it would be hard to tell.' Some colour is lent to this view by the fact that Walpole did not come back with the determination of asserting his authority at once and dominating the Cabinet: nor could he have been beguiled for a moment. Sunderland only wanted to close his mouth: he seduced him with a meagre bribe: he meant to suppress him altogether if he could. His project was to get Walpole appointed Postmaster-General for life, so that he might be for ever incapable of sitting in the House of Commons. George I. was always apt to follow Sunderland's advice, but in this case he showed no weakness: 'I had to part with him once, much against my will,' he said, 'and so long as he is willing to serve me I will never part with him again.' Walpole knew all this. So little did he pretend that there was cordiality and union, that he spent much of the session in idleness at Houghton. It may be that he had foreseen that an emergency was upon them when a strong hand would be needed if the country were to be saved, and he meant to be in a position to act instead of imputing

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blame. At all events, the emergency was there, and it mattered little to him how soon or in what way he returned to office, so long as he was at hand to cope with it.

The 'South Sea Bubble' is one of the few things of which Macaulay's schoolboy may safely be trusted to have heard, even if he is doubtful of its origin. The South Sea Company had been established in 1711 in accordance with Harley's scheme for dealing with the National Debt and restoring public credit. The foundation of this design was the temptation, held out to creditors, to exchange the guarantee of the British Treasury for the hazardous security of the riches and treasure to be gathered in abundance in the Spanish Main. The provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht threw inconvenient conditions upon the terms under which the Charter was held, but the directors were fortunate or skilful enough to hold a prosperous course. In 1717 they secured an extension of powers for raising capital, and in 1719 Aislabie, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, came before Parliament with a grand project, under which the Company was to be enabled to liquidate the entire debt of the country in twenty-six years. Walpole at once detected the fallacy in the proposal, and warmly advocated the claims of the Bank of England to be entrusted with the undertaking. A rivalry sprung up: the Bank was out-bid, and the Company had to pay seven and a half millions for the privilege of financing the Government. As Mr. Lecky says, it was wholly impossible that the scheme should have issued in anything but disaster. It did not only that, it created on its way a record and example for all time of treachery, fraud, greed, and

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imbecile credulity: the situation had obvious attractions for the dramatic instinct of Mr. E. M. Ward, who has left a permanent memorial on the walls of the National Gallery.

The Stock Exchange had its hour of triumph; the public went mad, and their mania took the form of a craving to buy. The South Sea Stock rose above a thousand pounds for every hundred. Amongst those who secured allotments were the King's mistresses; Sunderland, his Prime Minister; Aislaby, the Chancellor, and Charles Stanhope, the Secretary to the Exchequer; Craggs, father and son, respectively Secretary of State and Postmaster-General. Men of letters, dignitaries of the Church, leaders of fashion, joined eagerly in the scramble, and Walpole, making no pretence to ascetic austerity, made his hay abundantly whilst the sun was shining. Before the crash came, he had secured himself, and it is said that with his South Sea profits he purchased the famous gallery of pictures which are now not the least of the glories of the Hermitage Museum.

But there was not enough South Sea Stock to go round, and fresh bait must be found for the hungry fishes. Any rubbish would do to catch them. One Company issued an appropriate prospectus for importing jackasses from Spain, and quickly got their money subscribed. Two thousand pounds were immediately forthcoming 'for an undertaking which shall in due time be revealed.' Demoralisation could go no further, and many succumbed to the temptation of taking the money which was flung at them. The Prince of Wales had to be persuaded that his name would not look well amongst such a class of company promoters.

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The pace was too furious to last, and when the rage was abated the collapse was utter and irremediable. The wretched victims left off clamouring for stock and began to howl for vengeance, and it seemed as if their cry was answered. Most tragic of the sacrifices that followed was the case of Lord Stanhope. He had contrived to keep aloof from any infection of the epidemic, yet he was fiercely assailed in Parliament. So indignant was he, that his speech in reply caused the rupture of a blood-vessel, and he died, February 8th, 1721. Aislabie was expelled from Parliament in disgrace. The elder Craggs committed suicide; natural death, perhaps, saved his son from a like end. Sunderland was allowed to escape punishment—to live for another year. Charles Stanhope was acquitted by a majority of three votes. The Government paid a heavy price for their blunder. To Walpole it was in great measure due that Sunderland and Charles Stanhope survived, but what we should like to regard as generous forbearance takes a less pleasing form when we remember that he was roundly charged with acting as a screen to others lest importunate inquiry should reach uncomfortably near to himself. At all events, he was the only man capable of piecing together the shattered fragments of financial credit, and he was ready for the task. Macaulay describes his position with amusing candour: ‘When Threadneedle Street was daily crowded with the coaches of dukes and prelates Walpole’s calm, good sense preserved him from the general infatuation. He condemned the prevailing madness in public, and turned a considerable sum by taking advantage of it in private. When Parliament met, eager for confiscation and blood

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Walpole was the man on whom all parties turned their eyes.' 'Everybody longs for you in town, having no hopes from any but yourself,' wrote Jacomb, the Under-Secretary at War; 'they all cry out for you to help them, so that when you come, you will have more difficulties on you than ever you had.'

Townshend had replaced Stanhope as Secretary of State. Walpole now became First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. The new Parliament contained a majority of Whigs, and he had reason to count upon a lasting term of power. The duration of it was to fulfil, if not to exceed, his most sanguine hopes. He was by no means blind to the changes and chances of political life: 'I advise my young men never to use *always*,' was his cautious comment upon some profession of a fixed determination.

One of his most hazardous acts at the outset was his deliberate breach with Pulteney. Pulteney had been his friend; he had defended him in Parliament in 1712, and been amongst the most assiduous of visitors during the sojourn in the Tower. When Townshend had been dismissed and Walpole resigned in 1717, Pulteney had surrendered his office as Secretary at War. In 1720 he took offence because Walpole told him nothing of the negotiations in which he was engaged with Sunderland and the Prince of Wales, and this soreness was greatly aggravated when he was offered nothing better than the post of Cofferer of the Household, in the administration which was the outcome of these negotiations. We may be sure that Walpole intended to make it clear that there was to be no question of equality between them, but he

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cannot have looked forward without uneasiness to the settled hostility of his friend. He made some tentative overtures, but there was no middle way to be found, and Pulteney became the first great leader of Opposition. Mr. McCarthy says that Pulteney was 'a far more pertinacious, ingenious, and dangerous enemy than Carteret.' Dr. Johnson declared that he was 'as paltry a fellow as could be. He was a Whig who pretended to be honest, and you know it is ridiculous for a Whig to pretend to be honest,' which one would have to discount at once as obstinate prejudice, were it not that he goes on to dismiss Pitt as a meteor, but acknowledges Walpole to be a fixed star. Pulteney lacked the courage and firmness of character without which no political career can achieve greatness. In a moment of prudery he vowed that he would never take office again because he had been charged with a self-seeking spirit. To this rash resolve he adhered in 1742: in 1746 he overcame his scruples and accepted office with Granville, only to throw up his commission next day. Upon this Horace Walpole made the cruel comment: 'Who does not know that he had not judgment or resolution enough to engross the power which he had forfeited his credit and character to obtain?'

But Pulteney may have been a weak and timid statesman and at the same time a formidable and dashing politician. Walpole bore him no personal ill-will; Pulteney, although he never concealed his admiration, was not large-minded enough to overcome his resentment, and assailed the minister with an ardour that was not altogether assumed for dramatic effect. Pulteney, like Walpole, lacked the advantage of having been born in the

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purple: he had to make his way by his own wits and energy, and it is to be observed that there were no more conspicuous figures in the aristocratic world of politics than these two men of moderate condition, who sat side by side whilst they stormed at one another in the House of Commons.

In the midst of their combats they could exchange civilities. Pulteney loudly praised the minister's eloquence, and one day went so far as to beg that his intimacy with Dr. Pearce might not be a bar to his friend's appointment to the deanery of Wells. Walpole professed his sorrow that he could not accommodate the wish: the vacancy had already been filled; but very shortly afterwards he nominated the Doctor to the deanery of Winchester. Coxe, having accepted this story in one chapter, says later on that Walpole appointed Pearce because he had been a favourite of Queen Caroline. The former version is the more attractive and must not be discredited.

When Walpole was being attacked by Sandys in 1741, he quoted in his defence, *nil conscire sibi, nulli pallescere culpæ*. Pulteney, who probably knew a great deal more Latin than Sir Robert, declared that his classical knowledge was as faulty as his logic: *nulli* should be *nullæ*. Walpole at once bet a guinea and referred to the Clerk at the table, who decided against him. Pulteney held up the coin which was tossed towards him: 'It is the only money which I have received from the Treasury for many years,' he cried, 'and it shall be the last.'

When Walpole's end had come, Pulteney was approached with a view to dissociating him from the

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attack which impended. He showed no malicious delight in the prospect of retribution, but declared that it was not in his power to sway the impulse of Parliament in such a matter; 'the heads of parties being like the heads of snakes—carried on by their tails.' When the fury of battle was abated and the two warriors, laying down their arms, had retired to the calmer regions of the House of Lords, there was something of irony, almost of mockery, in the first meeting of the two men upon whom the eyes of their countrymen should have been resting with admiration and gravity, if not with indiscriminating gratitude and pride: 'Well, my Lord,' said the new Earl of Orford to the new Earl of Bath, 'here are we, the most insignificant fellows in England.'

This digression must be pardoned on the ground that Pulteney was closely connected with Walpole's political life, even if he did not greatly affect its course, and it seemed convenient to sketch him in slightly here.

Before he had been long in office, Walpole had a duty to perform from which he was not likely to flinch. He abhorred Jacobites and lived in constant dread of their machinations. Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, was a Jacobite, and, as we know, there were some who believed that had he received any encouragement in 1714, he might have become another King-maker. He was a thorough politician: Mr. Lecky bluntly says that he was 'a mere brilliant incendiary and was tainted with the guilt of most deliberate perjury.' It has been said that if he had succeeded in bringing back James, he would have modelled his own conduct on the precedent of Wolsey. The royal proclamation which had forbidden clergymen to interfere

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in politics was for him a dead letter not worth a thought. Thackeray imagined him as interfering very actively : ‘ His Lordship of Rochester passed many hours of this day composing Proclamations and Addresses to the country, to the Scots, to the Clergy, to the People of London and England ; announcing the arrival of the exiled descendant of three Sovereigns, and his acknowledgment by his sister as heir to the throne.’* Eight years had not cooled his ardour and he was a politician still. From Walpole he could hope for no mercy, and sufficient evidence to warrant impeachment set him to work at once. The Bishop was tried, condemned (1722), and sent to die in exile. Nothing like the indignation which had been roused against the Government by the prosecution of Sacheverell was witnessed now, but such popularity as was to be gained by suffering for a losing cause came to comfort Atterbury and hallow his departure with a modest show of martyrdom. Growing hungry as he devoured apace, Walpole next proceeded to lay an impost of 100,000*l.* upon the estates of Roman Catholics as compensation for all the danger, trouble, and annoyance for which they had been responsible. The fine was afterwards extended so as to include all non-jurors : Coxe naïvely relates that ‘ this instance of rigour effectually discouraged the Papists from continuing their attempts against the Government, and operated as a constant check on the turbulent spirits of the non-jurors.’

Walpole himself was living in a maze of intrigue. Carteret at Hanover was in the thick of his ill-fated commission to get a French dukedom for La Vrillière : enough has been said elsewhere of the hoodwinking, and

* *Esmond*.

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the spying, and counter-spying that this involved. Then Bolingbroke reappeared, bringing with him a natural genius for mischief. He made overtures to Walpole; told him all he knew, and more besides, of Carteret's manœuvres, and offered professions of good-will which were only sincere so long as they were likely to gain the end in view. Walpole did not want to have Bolingbroke for an enemy, but he was not prepared to yield entire restitution of his forfeited rights. He went so far as to advocate the concession of title and estates, but he drew the line at removing the attainder and opening the doors of Parliament. He was glad to hear what Bolingbroke had to tell him in private, but he had no wish to give free play to his versatile audacity in the House of Lords. Bolingbroke found himself 'three parts restored,' as he told Swift, and hated Walpole with three-fold spleen. He joined Pulteney in the conduct of the *Craftsman* for the purpose of venting his ill-humour. Carteret did not escape suspicion of being on terms with these allies whilst he was Walpole's colleague: events were soon to alienate him entirely, and compel him to become Pulteney's avowed comrade in opposition.

Undaunted by the numbers and known abilities of his opponents, Walpole exhibited a proud confidence in his own security, and an ample appreciation of his own deserts. It is generally supposed that he was Sir Robert by virtue of his Knighthood of the Garter. This is a picturesque tradition, but it is discredited by the fact that in the previous year (1725) he had revived the order of the Bath and recommended himself for one of the first Knighthoods. In 1726 he received the Garter,

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and it must be noted that because the Stuart Court in France still used the light blue riband, the colour was now changed at home to the darker colour. It is further to be observed that he thus enjoyed the very rare distinction of being a commoner Knight. Admiral Montagu had been admitted to the order before he left the House of Commons as Lord Sandwich; but very few have drawn from that source their only title of honour. In later years two Prime Ministers possessed the decoration: Lord North, who was heir to the Earl of Guildford, and Lord Palmerston, who was an Irish Viscount. Coxe says of Walpole at this time that 'he rather chooses to merit the highest titles than to wear them,' which is an excess of eulogy. Not content with appropriating to himself the two highest honours which were consistent with his remaining in the House of Commons, he accepted a further sign of favour by allowing his son to be created Baron Walpole.

Armed with these outward emblems of authority he proceeded to a vigorous manifestation of its exercise. He certainly intended to govern according to constitutional methods; but he meant in any case to govern. Lord Morley says that it was his policy to keep a party majority effective by means of a party cabinet; 'the cabinet system was the key to Parliamentary monarchy.' One need not fear to add that his idea of a united Cabinet was one in which the members obeyed him, and that he steadfastly purposed to be the Parliamentary monarch.

The two squalls which next passed over him were none of his raising. That which disturbed Ireland had

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been set going by Sunderland's grant for Wood's coinage. The Scottish outburst was raised in spite of his warning and resistance. The English country gentlemen were very angry because the Scottish brewers were attempting, not without success, to evade payment of the malt duty. In 1724 Walpole, foreseeing trouble, and spying beyond it the probability of a Jacobite coup, succeeded in checking the movement. But next year the House was too much for him and he was obliged to consent to a duty of sixpence a barrel on beer. Scotland was immediately in a tumult of riot and disaffection. The Act of Union had been violated, it was affirmed; King George was no longer King of theirs. The Secretary of State for Scotland was the Duke of Roxburgh, a friend of Carteret's, and no friend to Walpole. He scrupled not to connive at the rebellious purpose of the brewers, and insinuated a rumour that Walpole was on the verge of disgrace: Pulteney was to take his place and the Duke was all in favour of the change. Walpole was very soon in possession of the facts, and lost no time in restoring the spirit of union within his Government. Roxburgh was abruptly dismissed. Lucky or judicious then in the choice of an agent, Walpole sent the Earl of Ilay on a mission with full powers to deal with disaffection. The envoy, who afterwards succeeded his brother as third Duke of Argyle, acquitted himself with so much credit as to win Walpole's entire satisfaction and enduring regard. He discredited Roxburgh's predictions, and represented the case for the duty so plausibly that hostility began to waver. Some of the opponents were satisfied that the injury was not to be grievous, nor was

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the injustice flagrant. The Scottish brewers became gradually as imperfect in their loyalty and communion as the British Government; the agitation subsided, and Walpole triumphed.

Another awkward question was continually taxing Walpole's ingenuity. The King of Spain was by no means reconciled to the loss of Gibraltar, and throughout the course of foreign negotiations ran an impatient demand for its restitution. It is curious to note how often the idea was seriously entertained by kings and statesmen, and how decidedly it was always rejected by Parliament and the people. George I. had no sentiment and felt no scruples on the subject. In 1715 he had definitely offered to restore possession in order to avoid hostilities with Spain; but this was made void when their King broke the peace. The Regent, Duke of Orleans, who had been concerned in the negotiation, took upon himself to assume that the proposal was open to renewal, and, to suit his own purposes, revived it in 1720. Stanhope for one had no strong objection to offer, and was prepared to effect an exchange for Florida and St. Domingo. The King of Spain was stubborn and required unconditional surrender. George I., bent upon securing peace, went so far as to commit himself to this (June 1721).

Carteret was now Secretary of State, and he appears to have connived for the moment at the concession in full assurance that nothing of the kind would ever be ratified by Parliament. When the demand was renewed later on he was unhesitating in his resistance. Meanwhile matters drifted, the King of Spain alternately trying to

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take Gibraltar by force of arms and to recover it by the more peaceful methods of protest and persuasion. He was still occupied in these endeavours when the falling away of his ally Austria in 1727 satisfied him of the hopelessness of his task. He agreed to terms of peace and to the meeting of a Congress of Soissons. It was stipulated that nothing was to be said there on the subject of Gibraltar, yet we find Stephen Poyntz, one of the British representatives, writing to Townshend that he 'sees no daylight' so long as the Spaniards retain their grievance; they will never cease to contrive injury to our commerce in revenge: he sees no objection to the principle of exchange, and adds, 'I must own in such a case I should not think any injury done us.' To this Lord Townshend replied: 'What you propose in relation to Gibraltar is certainly very reasonable, and is exactly conformable to my opinion. . . . But you cannot be sensible of the violent and almost superstitious zeal which has of late prevailed among all parties in this Kingdom against any scheme for the restitution of Gibraltar upon any conditions whatsoever.' When Walpole had to answer an attack in Parliament upon the prolonged dallying with the question of exchange or concession, he was content to defend himself by saying that he had not been in the Government when George I. had written his letters, and that in any case there could be no surrender without the knowledge and consent of Parliament.

To carry on our illustration we must dip lightly into the future. It may surprise those who look upon Chatham as our first great builder of Empire to know

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that in 1757 he was willing to give up Gibraltar as the price to be paid for the alliance of Spain in his conflict with France. Later still, when negotiations were in progress at Paris for the conclusion of a general peace, after our confession of failure in America, Spain was still urging her demand: Lord Shelburne disliked the thought of concession, but he went so far as to discuss the possibility of an exchange for Porto Rico and West Florida. Spain, however, was not now strong enough to insist. It was the opinion of George III. that we should never have peace with Spain until we had consented, and that upon the whole we had better yield with a good grace.*

In 1727 came one of the slippery passages in Walpole's career. The scene has been described in which he waited on George II. to announce his father's death. The new King rudely declared his incredulity, told his Minister to go to Wilmington for orders, and retired to bed again. Lord Chancellor King modifies the story by asserting that George 'resolved to be in town as fast as he could that evening'; but the familiar version need not be rejected. Affairs for the moment were left to drift, and Walpole was not free from anxiety. Hervey declares that he abased himself so far as to tell Wilmington, 'I desire no share of power or business—one of your white sticks, or any other employment of that sort. . . .'. His object was to remain under cover with Government, and not to be left naked to his enemies. This does not suggest a noble spirit, but it is not inconsistent with the language Walpole addressed to Pulteney when he per-

* Fitzmaurice's *Shelburne*, iii. 263, 313.

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ceived that the end had really come. He knew from experience that Parliamentary censure could have inconvenient results.

Yet it may have been no more than a politic humouring of the man whom he knew he could dispose of ; how easily this was to be effected need not be repeated here. Wilmington retired, and Walpole found himself stronger than before. Townshend was still nominal chief, but Walpole's real supremacy was obvious. Then jealousy made the rift, which speedily widened until it was past hope of healing. It is said that Townshend's resentment came not alone from political vexation. He was proud, as he had every right to be, of the exalted position he occupied in the county of Norfolk, and he viewed with something like indignation the growing splendour and pretensions, the picture-gallery and the lavish hospitality which were thrusting Houghton into rivalry with Raynham. Queen Caroline was shrewd enough to detect early symptoms of the 'misunderstanding between the brother-ministers,' and she had no hesitation in giving her invaluable support to Walpole. Townshend knew that he was beaten, but he could not bring himself to confess it. The tension gave way in an altercation at Colonel Selwyn's house ; if friendly intervention had not been forthcoming the brothers would have had out their swords. Then Townshend did, with a good grace, what he might have earlier done with something even better. He truly explained that, 'as long as the firm had been Townshend and Walpole, the utmost harmony prevailed ; but it no sooner became Walpole and Townshend than things went wrong and a separation ensued.' He retired to Raynham (1730), and, with rare discretion, attempted no

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further intrusion into public life. Thus Walpole was left in undisputed authority; he had baffled Wilmington, got rid of Townshend, thawed the cold prejudice of George, and secured the warm approval of the sagacious Caroline. Yet he was not over-sanguine. Before long, Lord Chancellor King was writing: 'Sir Robert took occasion to tell me of the great credit he had with the King, and that it was principally by means of the Queen, who was the most able woman to govern in the world; however, he wished now he had left off when the King came to the throne, for he now looked upon himself to be in the worst situation of any man in England, and that he was now struck at by a great number of people.'

In spite of the ease with which Walpole appeared to be carrying all before him, he had to fight hard, and he was not ignorant of the perils which beset, and must still beset, his path. Thanks to the wholesale interception of diplomatic correspondence, he had learnt much of the rumours and schemes that were afloat. Here, for instance, is an extract from a letter addressed by Pozobueno, the Spanish Minister, to his own Government, which had come under Sir Robert's eyes (May 1726). M. de Fabrice, the King's Hanoverian Chamberlain, had told him that 'Mr. Pulteney took great pains to inform him that he was using every exertion to publish a work, before the sitting of Parliament, in which he will prove, by the clearest evidence, the misconduct of the present Government . . . accusing Sir Robert Walpole of mismanagement of the public money, of official malversation. He will also display . . . the violent temper of Lord Townshend . . . whose manner of

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acting, he says, seems to show a design, formed by him and Walpole, to sacrifice this King, and raise the pretender to the throne.' Atterbury had prepared a secret memorandum, which was perhaps at the bottom of this movement. In it he had laid down as axioms that Walpole had nothing to hope from the accession of George II., with whom he had 'all along lived in terms of defiance'; and that he 'did not love the Hanoverian Ministers.' From these he drew the inference that he must depend upon James for favour, and that he did not intend the Hanoverians to get firmly established in England. This seems a feeble accusation. Walpole had done nothing to conciliate James; he had himself dealt inexorably with Atterbury. Had he been implicated, Atterbury must have had better evidence than this. Bolingbroke, too, must have known. Now, from the time when Bolingbroke returned to England, 'three parts restored,' in 1725, to the day when Walpole covered him with opprobrium in the House of Commons in 1734, inveighing against the hypothetical 'anti-minister in a country where he really ought not to be . . . always intriguing against those that are in without any regard to justice or the interests of their country,' there was no amity between the two men. At the outset Bolingbroke had gone into opposition, and sought to discredit Walpole with the King. In the end he confessed to Wyndham, 'My part is over, and he who remains on the stage after his part is over deserves to be hissed off'; and he departed beaten into exile. Had he held proofs of Walpole's guilt, as he must have done had such proofs existed, he would surely not have missed such a rare opportunity for striking. As for the Hanoverian Ministers, no doubt Walpole was deter-

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mined that they should not enjoy too much of the King's favour and confidence, but he was not more apt to repress the activity of these gentlemen than he was to curb the aspirations of his British colleagues in the Government.

All the evidence on the contrary supports the theory that Walpole was ardently anti-Jacobite. He dreaded a Jacobite invasion, and he was not slow to pursue prominent Jacobites to their undoing. No doubt he had anxious misgivings as to his own prospects, but at the worst he did not despair. 'I shall certainly go out,' he said to Sir William Yonge; 'but let me recommend you not to go into violent opposition, as we must soon come in again.' None the less, he was aware that his enemies could put him in a dangerous predicament. They were skilful and unscrupulous, and a case might be contrived sufficiently specious to create suspicion; and suspicion in such a case was perilous. He had been in the Tower once, and had no taste for another enforced abstinence from politics, even if nothing worse need be feared. If he were a conqueror, he felt that he was advancing through an enemy's country, and could not afford to neglect precautions.

We shall have to consider presently the question whether Walpole was or was not an unscrupulous briber, but we must admit at once that in 1727 he boldly placed a cash value on his Sovereign's favour. Wilmington had made what he considered handsome propositions in connection with the Civil List. Walpole outbid him without hesitation. He assigned to the King 700,000*l.*, with an additional 100,000*l.* which belonged in justice to the Prince of Wales.

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To this he added the right to take certain surpluses which ought to have been applied to the Sinking Fund. Thus the King had about 900,000*l.*; 200,000*l.* more than any of his predecessors. Wilmington had allotted to the Queen 60,000*l.*: Walpole made it 100,000*l.*; double the portion of any previous Queen Consort. Not satisfied, the King presently claimed over 100,000*l.* for alleged deficiencies in his revenue. Wilmington, hoping to recover his credit, took up his case and pressed the demand. Walpole, unabashed, immediately acquiesced, and Parliament obeyed him. The faithful Shippen alone protested. Shippen, the inflexible Jacobite, never concealed his disapproval of the new dynasty. He was the one supporter of the lost cause whom Walpole held in favour: he was perhaps the only one who felt kindly towards the Minister.* In the final crisis he refused to triumph in his overthrow: he declared it was only a scheme for turning out one minister and bringing in another; it was indifferent to him who was in and who was out. From first to last he was Walpole's implacable opponent on principle, but never an insidious foe. Nor was Walpole cynic enough to be blind to his integrity: he would not say who was corrupted, so ran his judgment, but he would say who was not corruptible: that man was Shippen.

Walpole then was in power, beyond rivalry, but by no means secure from the assaults of envy and malice. There was Bolingbroke always skirmishing on his flank. Carteret, his overtures of friendship flouted, was about to become Pulteney's ally. In the House of Commons in close

* It is said that Walpole once connived at the escape of one of Shippen's relatives who was implicated in a Jacobite plot.

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alliance with Pulteney and Shippen was Sir William Wyndham, of whom Speaker Onslow wrote that 'he was in my opinion the most made for a great man of any one that I have known in this age.' Speaker Onslow elsewhere condemns the practice of such men as attack Government without principle for the sake of turning out ministers and getting into office themselves; and he applies his stricture to the conduct of Walpole in opposing Stanhope's Peerage Bill after he and Townshend had been driven out of the Government in 1717. We have seen that Shippen cared little who was in and who was out so long as he could aim his blow at every man and measure that represented Hanoverian rule. To the rest of the Opposition, Onslow's criticisms might not unjustly have been applied: it must be admitted that they had early learnt the maxim that it is the business of an Opposition to oppose, and that they fought Walpole's measures because Walpole was their enemy. The name under which they elected to act was that of 'the Patriots,' but their idea of patriotism was unconventional. Palm had written to his master, the Emperor, 'Some eminent subjects, who are well inclined to your imperial majesty's service, and extremely opposed to the present maxims of the ministry, have assured me [how the Emperor and the King of Spain could best damage Walpole's credit]. . . . Among them William Pultney is the chief and the mightiest. . . . he has aimed at and acquired the name of true English patriot.' The title should have been a valuable asset, but it was not destined to bring credit on the party. In the General Election of 1734 Walpole employed every available weapon to demolish their lofty pretensions and expose

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their selfish and mischievous principles. His purpose was so far served that there was a very ready inclination to drop a name on which so much opprobrium had been piled; and when later on the famous band of brothers, composed of Cobham, Grenville, Lyttelton, and Pitt, were dubbed the 'Boy Patriots,' the application was avowedly opprobrious.

It must be remembered always that the guiding motive of Walpole's long administration was the preservation of peace. It is not necessary to recapitulate the various combinations which he had to encourage or thwart, the menaces from which he had to seek refuge in negotiations, nor the conflicts from which he had to keep his master aloof almost by force. So long as he could keep England out of war he was content, and looked upon domestic affairs as comparatively trifling. The Irish tumult over Wood's coinage had troubled him little. He had reprimanded Grafton sharply enough, but he was content to leave Carteret to settle matters in his own way. The episode was a nuisance, but of no serious importance. The Scotch disturbances, as we have seen, he disposed of easily enough. Not less successful was he in dealing with the Dissenters who were clamouring for relief. His policy in such cases was to 'let sleeping dogmas lie,' as a recent essayist has recommended. He feared all religious agitation: the Sacheverell outburst had taught him a lesson; and he thought the less the throne was brought into connection with these issues the better for its security. 'It is my way to provide against the present difficulty that presses,' was one of his maxims, and he acted on it now. Hoadly, Bishop of Salisbury, was a man of liberal sympathy and

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democratic principles, and was a sturdy advocate of religious toleration 'in this country which was in reality a popular government that only bore the name of monarchy.' He supported the claims of the Dissenters, and they had to be dealt with somehow. One historian has frankly asserted that Walpole 'squared' the bishop, and bribed all the agitators. History certainly testifies that when a deputation approached the Minister, they were all 'absolutely dependent on Sir Robert and chosen by his contrivance; they spoke only as he prompted and acted only as he guided.' By means of bribery or persuasion he managed, at all events, to keep things quiet. It was after long waiting, that Dr. Chandler, at the head of another deputation, demurred to his assurance of sympathy and his regret that the time for action had not yet arrived. 'You have so repeatedly returned this answer, that I trust you will give me leave to ask when the the time will come.' 'If you require a specific answer,' said Walpole, 'I will give it you in a word—Never.*' But trouble was to come when he brought forward his Excise Bill in 1733. This measure has been described by one historian as 'an expedient to diminish the Land Tax, which in the time of war had been as high as four shillings in the £ by an excise upon tobacco and wine which, along with the salt duty was to balance the subtraction of one shilling in the £ from the tax on land. Walpole was anxious to conciliate the landowning classes. Modern Governments are accused of adopting measures unduly favourable to the working classes for the purpose of catching votes. It was

* This was probably in the mind of Lord Palmerston when he gave his famous answer to the butcher of Tiverton.

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his policy to legislate for the gentlemen of England, with a view of attaching them to the throne and the Whig Government. The motive which he professed was to make London a 'Free Port and, by consequence, the market of the world.' The King's Speech of 1721 has already been quoted: its language would not come amiss from a member of the Cobden Club. Walpole consistently advocated free exchange with the Colonies; and whatever vote-catching purpose he might have to cloak, he had no difficulty in representing his Excise measure as consistent with his Free Trade principles. He sought to prove that in practice there was no injustice to be feared: customs he said, are duties paid by the merchant upon importation: excises, duties payable by the retail trader upon consumption. By some of his officials and colleagues he was assisted gallantly: 'I was always of opinion,' wrote Delafarge, Under-Secretary of State, to Waldegrave, 'that even if it went so far as a general excise and few or no customs, as it is in Holland, we should by this means become a wealthy nation.' In the House of Commons. Talbot, the Solicitor-General, declared that 'it was only an alteration in the mode of levying the tax on tobacco and wine to facilitate commerce by requiring the tax to be paid when they were to be used instead of when they were imported. . . . Infinite frauds were to be prevented, the fair dealer would be protected, prices would be reduced, consumption would be doubled, and the revenue would be proportionately improved so that the land tax might be entirely remitted.'

But there were vast obstacles to be overcome. It must be remembered that there still lingered in the minds

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of the people, a capacity for suspicion and credulity rather to be looked for in a race of savages. As late as 1745, the remedy of the royal touch was solemnly administered in Edinburgh. Not until 1736 was the law repealed under which death was the legal penalty of witchcraft. When Chesterfield reformed the Calendar, the cry at the ensuing election was, 'Give us back our eleven days.' It was not difficult then to set going a passion of alarm concerning the new excise. It was rumoured that it was only a cover for the imposition of a system of general taxes; a host of excise officers were to be let loose upon the public to pry and search in violation of the sanctity and privacy of domestic life. Liberty was to be destroyed; Parliament superseded; the Crown made absolute. Before the dismayed eyes of men floated confused visions of King Charles's arbitrary taxes and the tyranny of the Spanish Inquisition. Opposition saw their chance, and fanned the flame with spirit.

Whether the landowners liked the proposal or not, a number of exalted individuals joined in the attack. Walpole's enemies saw their opportunities: a cabal of peers headed by Argyle, Montrose, Chesterfield, and Cobham, deputed Lord Stair to wait upon the Queen and warn her that unless Walpole was dismissed, the public rage would be reflected from him on to the throne: but Caroline did not flinch. Walpole, indeed, offered to resign, but this was treated, as he intended it should be treated, as a formality; and he proceeded to deal resolutely with the situation. As usual, he had one eye turned towards the Jacobites. At Oxford, there were riots, and here, if anywhere, it might be apprehended that the cause would be

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thrust forward. This was not so ; but the agitation against the Bill was violent and dangerous enough without added elements. Mobs were encouraged to approach and even invade the House of Commons : and here is to be observed a curious precedent for a modern episode. Walpole was no coward when he was in the mood for fighting ; he was not to be put down by intimidation, and he was not afraid of plain speaking. He steadily refused to regard these demonstrations as orderly and legitimate expressions of public sentiment ; ‘Gentlemen may give them what name they think fit ; it may be said they came hither as humble supplicants, but I know whom the law calls sturdy beggars’ which brought down on him a storm of indignation, not less fierce than that which a recent Postmaster-General aroused by some language, not dissimilar, spoken in the House of Commons.

Walpole incurred personal danger. He had to escape through the lobby, filled with rough men intent on mischief, and succeeded only by the artifice of hiding in his cloak and roaring out ‘Liberty, Liberty, no Excise.’ In this uncomfortable posture, and bravely covered by Edward Walpole, his son, Pelham, and General Churchill, he was smuggled out to Alice’s Coffee-house. When he came to the palace to report progress, or want of progress, he found the sturdy King wearing the hat he had worn at Malplaquet and brandishing the sword he had carried at Oudenarde, eager to put himself at the head of his Guards and dash into the fray. It was Walpole’s duty to dissuade him, and George was satisfied with the fighting temper that his Minister had shown : ‘He is a brave

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fellow,' he declared, 'and has more spirit than any man I know.' The Bill was killed by agitation. Walpole had no alternative but to withdraw it: to get it through Parliament and to put it into operation were alike impossible. Even amongst his colleagues there was treachery. Chesterfield was the prime offender, and with all the ignominy with which the process could be invested, he was dismissed from the post of Lord Steward. Stair, Bolingbroke, Marchmont, and Clinton, in their several stations, were visited with similar punishment. So long as he was in power, Walpole meant to stand no nonsense. There is an amusing account in Hervey of an interview between him and the Duke of Newcastle, who stopped him one day in the palace, and said; 'If you please I would speak one word with you before you go.'

'I do not please, my lord,' said Sir Robert; 'but if you will you must.'

'Sir, I shall not trouble you long.'

'Well, my lord, that is something.'

Newcastle was not a man of independent spirit, and he remained as faithful to Walpole as he was capable, under pressure of events and of natural disposition, of being faithful to anybody: but it is easy to believe that Walpole was not laying up for his evil day a reserve of personal devotion amongst his colleagues and followers. To these evidences of his determination to be an autocrat, may be added his treatment of Sir John Barnard's Bill for reducing the interest on the National Debt. Walpole had himself prepared a similar scheme: Barnard's he opposed. For this inconsistency he pleaded, amongst other excuses, that Barnard's measure was compulsory in effect; his was to

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be voluntary : also that Barnard was going to destroy the Sinking Fund ; he had aimed at confirming it. Barnard replied that the clauses in his Bill which were attacked had been inserted on the motion of Walpole's own friends ; but on a division it was thrown out. Walpole could, of course, count on the approval, undeserved as it might be, of all those who objected to reduction. Trevor had written from the Hague to Horace Walpole, the elder, that it was to be feared that any such reduction would 'fill the state with desponding, dangerous, and desperate subjects.' It may be that Walpole honestly believed that Barnard's Bill would impair the Sinking Fund and upset his own intentions and calculations ; but he certainly suffered the imputation of being moved by nothing but jealousy.

Walpole was in fact supreme : but his supremacy had not been acquired cheaply. At the General Election of 1734, he is said to have spent 60,000*l.* out of his own pocket ; including 10,000*l.* for Coke and Morden in his native country : and they were beaten. Meanwhile, he was steadfastly bent on keeping England out of the war which seemed on the Continent to be inextinguishable. In 1734 Fleury, England's most valuable asset, was showing signs of defection, and was making secret overtures to the Emperor. So secret were these negotiations, that when he received an answer to his letter 'he opened it at arm's length and in the chimney.' Unluckily he dropped it, and before he had mastered its contents it was burnt. This left him in the awkward position of not knowing how he stood or how to reply. The Emperor was offended at his silence, and regarded the story of the chimney as an excuse for waiting on

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events. The correspondence broke down, but Walpole was forced into acquiescence with the King's demand for warlike preparation. He hated the idea of war and dreaded its consequences. 'Madam,' he boasted to the Queen, 'there are fifty thousand men slain this year in Europe, and not one Englishman.' He had not one spark of the martial fire which inspired Pitt and agitated George. 'My politics are to keep free from all engagements as long as we possibly can,' he said, for he believed that once engaged in war, to get out again must always be a formidable difficulty : 'For my part,' he once said, 'I think you may as well hope to break in upon the constancy of two lovers in their honeymoon as to stop the career of two powers just engaged in war, in the heat of their resentment, and before they have had time to feel, reflect, and grow cool.'

It would be difficult to represent him as the first preacher of Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform, because he was no reformer ; but peace and, through peace, retrenchment were undoubtedly dear to his heart. In his Treasury business his true happiness was found, and there is a passage in a letter from Hervey to the elder Horace Walpole which bears eloquent testimony to his versatile talents in an office more exacting then than it is now : 'Your brother, I believe, will be as famous in Westminster Hall as in the House of Commons. He has lately gained immortal honour by a determination in a suit between Nash and the India Company in the court of Chequer. The barons being divided, it was his province as chancellor to make the decision . . . he summed up in a speech of an hour and a half and gave his opinion

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and sentence with as great skill, strength, eloquence, and clearness, as if he had been bred to the law and had practised no other business all his life.'

The death of Queen Caroline in 1737 made no outward change in Walpole's position. She died, bequeathing the King to his care, and he was apparently more firmly established than before. But his best friend, the fountain of his strength, was gone. That he was not unconscious of this he betrayed in curious ways. He had always treated Caroline with a coarse and brutal frankness which seems incredible to us. He had cracked unseemly jokes with her and drawn, indeed, unqueenly repartees. Now, as we have seen, he scrupled not to set about replacing her without pretence of delicacy and in a truly practical spirit. He had not entire confidence in King George, or in his own power of controlling him. 'With all his personal bravery,' he once said, 'he is as great a political coward as ever wore a crown': which was certainly an unwise and unjust assertion. But he thought he knew what was the safest treatment: daughters were of no use to him:* mistresses were the thing: and he was not too nice to recommend an immediate importation.

Despite the smoothness of the surface, the foundations had received a shock. It is not to be supposed that if Caroline had lived she could have saved Walpole in the catastrophe that was coming. The combination of difficulties was insuperable; but it is true that he had to face them bereft of his surest support, and almost without an ally.

* It is said that the Lord Chancellor was attempting an intrigue through the medium of Princess Amelia.

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It will be convenient to explain at once the origin and end of the Spanish War, which was the cause of Walpole's fall. Spain laid claim to a monopoly of trade with the South American continent, adding indefinite pretensions to the Northern territories as well. Treaties had been made in 1667 and 1670 which need not be explained. In the Treaty of Utrecht may be found the seeds of all the trouble that followed, and it must be confessed that the story is not one of the most glorious in the annals of England. By a contract, known as the Assiento Treaty, Spain granted to the South Sea Company the privilege of conducting a trade in slaves. With this there was conceded the right of trading in Spanish ports to the extent of one vessel of 600 tons. This regulation may have been observed in the letter, but it was notoriously and fraudulently violated in the spirit by the simple process of employing the one ship as a feeder to a fleet of merchantmen lying off the coast. Spain was naturally and rightly incensed at this breach of faith. Under the old treaties she retained the right of searching ships at her own ports, nominally to prevent the importation of arms. She now extended this provision to meet a new emergency, and proceeded to board English ships on the high seas with the avowed object of suppressing all irregular and illicit traffic. Mixed up with this quarrel there were disputes about the rights of log-cutting in the Bay of Campeachy, and salt-gathering on the island of Tortuga; but for the purpose of understanding Walpole's trouble, the ship question only need be considered. Spain was in no friendly mood with England: she thought she was in good fighting trim, and she confidently relied on the support of France.

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Elizabeth Farnese, the imperious queen, had other grievances; she was the ruling spirit, and her active hostility was reflected in the national temper. Throughout 1737 and 1738 protests, recriminations, and empty professions of good intentions were exchanged. Walpole fought desperately for peace. He was well aware that the English case was far from being irrefutable; his dread of war was as strong as ever. The war party, however, were steadily gaining strength; national pride or prejudice was easily provoked in their support. They doubtless persuaded themselves that their cause was just, but before and beyond their eagerness to fight lay the passion for hunting Walpole. In the Cabinet, Hardwicke and Newcastle had caught the military fever. Newcastle was generally inclined to join his fortunes to those of Walpole, but he was not the man to sacrifice his prospects for an unpopular cause, and whither he went Hardwicke was sure to go. The King, of course, was in favour of action.

To embarrass Walpole and inflame the war-cry came now the strange story of Jenkins. This mariner appeared in London with a bloody tale of how, so long ago as 1731, his ship had been boarded in force, his crew subjected to outrage, and he himself imprisoned and shorn of one or both ears. He hit the popular fancy with exquisite precision. When asked what he had said and done, he replied that 'he had recommended his soul to his God and his cause to his country.' It is a remarkable fact that this hero's case has never been definitely disposed of. According to one version he had never been to sea at all; he had been cropped of his ear in an English pillory as a common rogue. Other witnesses aver that he possessed

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both his ears all the while, and that the fragment which he exhibited was in the nature of a stage property. He actually appeared before the House of Commons to be interrogated, and he lived in the midst of an inquisitive multitude. It is strange, therefore, that his fraud, if fraud there were, was not exposed. It is generally admitted now that the man was an impostor, more or less; but he served his purpose. A martyr was wanted, and the claims of Jenkins were not too carefully scrutinised. His blood cried aloud for vengeance, and Walpole undertook an impossible task when he attempted to stifle the clamour by prudent reflections on the fact that even the justice of a cause did not guarantee a triumph of arms. It was pushing back the Atlantic with a mop to address an exultant Parliament in such language as this: 'It is without doubt a very proper way of arguing to talk highly of the honour, the courage, the superior power of this nation; and, I believe, I have as good an opinion of the honour, courage, and power of this nation, as any man can, or ought to have; but other nations must be supposed to have honour as well as we, and all nations generally have a great opinion of their courage and power. If we should come to an open rupture with Spain, we might in all probability have the advantage; but victory and success do not always attend upon that side which seems the most powerful. Therefore, an open rupture, or declared war between two potent nations, must always be allowed to be an affair of the utmost importance to both; and as this may be the consequence of our present deliberations, we ought to proceed with great coolness, and with the utmost caution.'

Again, he boldly argued that 'if proper satisfaction and

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full reparation can be obtained by peaceable means, we ought not to involve the nation in a war, from the event of which we have a great deal to fear ;' and when there came the obvious taunt that he was afraid of war because his security depended upon peace, he could only retort that 'if we are to judge by reason alone, it is the interest of a minister, conscious of any mismanagement, that there should be a war ; because by a war the eyes of the public are diverted from examining into his conduct ; nor is he accountable for the bad success of a war as he is for that of an administration.' He staked all upon the success of his negotiations, and to this end he exerted his utmost ingenuity. Nor was he wholly unsuccessful. He managed to conclude an agreement with Spain under which England was to receive 95,000*l.* by way of compensation ; but there was no word about the right of search, and no promise that such aggressors as those who had persecuted Jenkins should be punished. Moreover, a counter claim on account of Spanish ships molested by Byng in 1718 was allowed to stand.

It says much for Walpole's parliamentary skill that he was able to secure the assent of both Houses to this bargain. So angry were the Opposition that they decided upon the formal secession which is described elsewhere. John Selwyn wrote to the Hon. Thomas Townshend : 'It is the opinion of the ministry that Sir William Wyndham intended to be sent to the Tower [for the violence of his language] : it is also said they all hope to be taken into custody at the next call, and not to make submission ; but how far they will carry this, and what will be the event of it, time must show.' The secession was foolish,

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and as soon as the situation became desperate there was a general return. In fact, the Opposition had the game in their own hands. Lord Hervey was now a warm supporter of Walpole: he was to be rewarded with the Privy Seal next year. But his tone in Parliament was despondent. 'Let us hear the convention read before we condemn it,' was his faint recommendation. So weak indeed was the apology of the Government on the question of search, that Horace Walpole could think of nothing better to say than that the right was not claimed by Spain; it was only exercised. He presumably meant that it was unnecessary to demand a formal renunciation of what did not exist; the practice was to be abandoned, and that was the important point. But his assurances were speedily discredited, and the frailty of the convention became apparent. Spain did not pay her 95,000*l.*, and began to complain because England had not paid her fine for the 1718 transactions; also because a British squadron was cruising in the Mediterranean. She accused England of a breach of faith, and plainly affirmed her purpose of exercising the right of search. Keene, our Minister, was instructed to ask for an immediate repudiation of this. Spain meant to fight. France assumed the rôle of peacemaker, but the Family Compact was secretly intended, and her weight was to go into the scale against England. Peace was no longer possible; in October 1739 war was declared, and the seceders came back rejoicing. The public were crazy with delight, and went 'Mafeking,' as our slang would call it. Walpole uttered one of those sentences which have somehow found perpetual record: 'They are ringing the bells now: they will be wringing their hands soon.' At first

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success blessed our efforts, but this did little good to Walpole. It was rather held up as reproach for his tardiness in getting to work. Then things went amiss, and he got all the blame. In 1740 died the King of Prussia, and the peace of nations was threatened by the accession of his warrior son. To make matters worse, the Emperor Charles VI. died also, and his daughter Maria Theresa speedily became the cause and centre of European conflict. It is enough to say that England became involved in a long and complicated series of events in the midst of which the Spanish war almost sunk into oblivion, and that when peace came to be signed at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, the right of search and the debt of 95,000*l.* were both ignored, and the origin of the war was treated as though it had never been a matter of dispute.

Meanwhile Walpole was in a grievous plight. He again tendered his resignation to the King, who only reproached him for talking of retreat in the hour of danger. If ever Walpole could endure the prospect of resignation it may well have been so now. Posterity has agreed in blaming him for having been a party to the Spanish war. In the case of the Excise scheme he had brought forward a proposal which he had deemed to be just and wise; he had been forced to surrender to an opposition too strong to be resisted. He had offered to resign, but he was not morally bound to do so. He was not pledged to carry his measure, nor had he committed himself by any uncompromising personal professions. He could yield without loss of honour. In the case of the war he was situated otherwise. His character and career were permanent protests against a rupture of peace without positive compulsion. He had

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said that the circumstances did not justify such a rupture, and he would not be forced by clamour to consent. Yet protesting thus, he did consent. Better for him had it been to refuse the responsibility which others were ready so lightly to assume. But he could not bear to part with office: moreover he undoubtedly believed that he was indispensable. He knew the policy which he was forced to adopt was vicious, but he thought that he was the only man who could direct it so as to avoid disaster. 'I never heard that it was a crime to hope for the best,' was his own excuse; and it certainly calls to mind the proud boast of Pitt that he alone could save his country. Nevertheless he was to sink under his ill-omened task.

Early in 1741, Sandys in one House and Carteret in the other moved to pray the Sovereign to remove Sir Robert for ever from his service. The debate was fierce, but the attack was not pressed with absolute unanimity. Honest Shippen, mindful of his former obligation, refused to press the harassed Minister. Edward Harley, bent upon showing no vindictive spirit, refused to vote against the man who had sent Lord Oxford to the Tower: 'I am now, sir, glad of this opportunity to return good for evil, and to do to that honourable gentleman and his family that justice which he denied to mine.' It was during this debate that Walpole declared that he was no great master of foreign affairs, and made no pretence to direct the movements of admirals and generals; yet his influence was so far appreciated abroad that Trevor wrote from the Hague, after his escape, 'people here hardly know how to express their joy sufficiently . . . his health is now daily toasted

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here.' But at home the ground was sinking beneath his feet. The hot wave of enthusiasm had been succeeded by the chill of disillusion. Bad harvests and interrupted trade were causing much distress. In the Cabinet he had no colleagues bound to him by ties of personal devotion: Newcastle was preparing to leave the sinking ship, and was planning a transfer of allegiance. Discontent was deep and general; nobody gave Walpole credit for having endeavoured to avoid war; they blamed him for giving them no triumphs. He was supposed to have been tame and timid, and that is a fatal imputation. Lord Palmerston, at the height of his popularity, was covered with a sudden and passing cloud of obloquy for having shown unexpected meekness under French provocation. Walpole had not Palmerston's hold over the people, and there was no reserve of strength to help him through. A general election was imminent, and he made desperate efforts to fortify his position. He induced the King to allow him to offer the Prince of Wales an increase of income; but Frederick, much as he wished for the money, was stubborn enough to refuse any proposals conveyed through such a medium. Lord Macaulay has adopted the tradition that Pitt made overtures, and promised that he would fight for Walpole in return for an undertaking that the King's prejudice against him should be dispelled. Walpole preferred to rely on his unaided resources, and rejected the terms: then Pitt joined in the hue and cry. It is not easy to see how Pitt expected to profit by this: he could scarcely think that Walpole would survive, and that with him were to be the rewards of the future. Yet Walpole himself had not surrendered hope: he had come to regard himself as in-

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vulnerable, and he retained in the thick of the storm an infatuated confidence.

It has been alleged against Walpole that in his dire emergency he now entered into correspondence with the Jacobites. That he ever entertained for a moment the contingency of a restoration is inconceivable, but it is not impossible, or even improbable, that he aimed at enlisting the support of Tory-Jacobites by some kind of compromise. At the best the case against him is 'non-proven,' for he undoubtedly preserved a letter which he had received from Carte, a Jacobite agent, and in which the passing of a communication is clearly indicated. To what extent this was of a compromising nature, and whether the attempt was entirely culpable and damaging to his honour need not be too minutely examined. It was certainly not tempting enough or definite enough to satisfy James, for a letter appears amongst the Walpole Papers, addressed to the elder Horace, which conclusively proves the nullity of the result: 'The Pretender, as your great brother positively assured me, to his certain knowledge, sent at least an hundred letters, which were transmitted to his friends in 1741. The purport of them was to engage them to use all possible endeavour in order to compass Walpole's demolition.'

The glass was falling steadily. Pulteney's vote of censure was rejected by a bare majority of three. Walpole had made the mistake of despising his enemies, and even now seemed incapable of realising that he was doomed. Yet he was no longer buoyant and roystering. 'He who in former years was asleep as soon as his head touched the pillow, now never sleeps above an hour without waking,

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and he who at dinner always forgot he was minister, and was more gay and thoughtless than all his company, now sits without speaking, and with his eyes fixed for an hour together.' So wrote his son Horace on the eve of the fall. He made another effort to conciliate the Prince of Wales, but it was in vain. During the general election of 1741, the Prince had contracted heavy debts by the assistance he gave to Opposition candidates. 'He would listen to no proposals of any kind,' Edward Walpole told the Duke of Devonshire, 'till Sir Robert Walpole was removed, because he thought Sir Robert had injured him.'

Election petitions were of course mere tests of strength between parties: 'People admitted that they never considered the cause, but the men,' wrote Hervey, 'nor ever voted according to justice and right, but from solicitation and favour.' On the Westminster Election the Government managed to scrape together a majority of four; but they were actually defeated on another vote of small importance. Each division was attended by every man who was capable of being dragged out of bed and lifted through the lobbies. The struggle was desperate, and on February 2nd, 1741, a final blow was struck. The Chippenham Election was decided against the Government by a majority of sixteen. On the 11th, Walpole ceased to be a Minister, and became an Earl.

The sequel has already been told. Pulteney was obviously the man of the moment; but he failed entirely. It is not easy to explain exactly how far he ordered the disposal of affairs. Mindful of his self-denying ordinance, he refused the highest office and contented himself with a place in the Cabinet without a department. To New-

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castle he wrote, 'As the disposition of places is in my hands, I will accept none myself: I have so repeatedly declared my resolution in that point that I will not contradict myself;' and it is suggested that he nominated Wilmington to be First Lord, on the principle of the dog in the manger, in order to keep out Carteret. He would not take first place himself, but chose to see a nonentity there rather than a strong colleague. On the other hand, Sir Robert told the Duke of Devonshire that all his friends assured him that his retirement was absolutely necessary; then describing the consequent negotiations, he adds: 'This was fixed with the D. of N—, Lord Ch—r, Lord C—tt, and Mr. Pulteney, but the King has declared Lord Will—n my successor, which leaves the presidentship open, so that Lord C—tt can only be president, except one of the secretaries be removed for him.' As a matter of fact Harrington became President, and Carteret replaced him as Secretary of State.

One is inclined to believe, and tempted to hope, that it was by the personal desire and action of the King that his old friend and favourite was promoted to the first office. It has even been alleged that Walpole encouraged the intention, and for the sake of dramatic effect one would like to think that he was, to this extent, responsible for the appointment of the man who had been preferred before him, and whom he had incontinently displaced, fifteen years before.

Walpole was well aware that he was not immune from grave danger. He was well aware also that the attack had been purposely directed against himself rather than against his measures. Pulteney had proclaimed a deter-

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mination 'to change the minister and change the measures'; but it was no surprise to Walpole to find his successors proceeding at once to borrow from the Sinking Fund, undeterred by the reflection that they had made this practice one of their heaviest charges against himself. For poverty of resource and in order to cover their nakedness they would be the more likely to make a formidable attack upon their victim. Walpole endeavoured to make a bargain with Pulteney as we have seen; but Pulteney was either unable or afraid to resist the general desire.

When Lord Limerick proposed a Committee to inquire into the last twenty years of Walpole's administration, Pulteney connived at his defeat; but he was awed by the rage which this aroused, and he was a consenting party to the resolution which Limerick then carried to restrict the inquiry to ten years. Of this Committee the product was not sensational. Their difficulties were not few. In order to remove one awkward witness, Walpole induced the King to give a peerage to Edgecumbe, who had been briber-in-chief in Cornwall.* Many witnesses positively refused to give evidence at the risk of compromising themselves: a Bill was, therefore, introduced and carried through the House of Commons to indemnify all persons bearing witness against Orford. In the Lords, Chesterfield amongst others, supported it in language of savage animosity; but Hardwicke led the opposition, and it was rejected by 109 to 57 votes. The Committee issued their report in November. It is enough to say that Walpole had no further cause for alarm: his fate was not

* Lecky, i. 434. Cornwall had an excessive number of representatives in Parliament.

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to be that of Oxford, nor of Bolingbroke. In December Waller moved for a new inquiry, but he was defeated by 253 to 186 and the attempt may be said to have died of inanition: of impeachment and of pains and penalties no more was heard. From this time until the end Walpole occupied a position similar in some respects to that which may not be improperly ascribed to Lord Melbourne after 1841. King George was not suffering from youth and inexperience, but he had lost a servant whom he liked and trusted, and who was the sole repository of experience in the management of Cabinets. The Ministers were quarrelling, and jealousy was rampant. Wilmington died in 1743. Pulteney's influence was dissipated by his elevation to the peerage. Carteret strove eagerly for the succession of his faction: he is said to have urged the King to submit his claims for Walpole's adjudication. Walpole, at all events, was able to wipe out one old score: he gave verdict for Pelham; and Carteret had to wait another year or two for his forty-eight hours of premiership.

Honourable and gratifying as this position may have been, it cost Walpole his life. He had retired to Houghton; not, indeed, to seek contented retirement like Townshend, for he had no indoor resources: not to hunt and carouse again, for his health was broken. He needed to tend carefully a painful malady. But the King summoned him to London, and he obeyed. The journey aggravated the disease. Drastic remedies caused as much suffering as they removed: the patient lingered a little under opium: on March 18th, 1745, he died in the fifty-ninth year of his age.

We must examine now the allegation of bribery which

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is always associated with the name of Walpole. The one thing about him which is always remembered is that he once said 'Every man has his price.' The origin of the story appears to be, that when he found it impossible to restrain his followers in the House of Commons from seeking vengeance on persons implicated in the South Sea disasters, he confessed his vexation to the King, and said in his wrath, 'As to the revolvers, he knew the reasons and the price of every one of them.'* But even if the *obiter dictum* be taken in its widest significance, it was not necessarily his own. During the debates on the repeal of the Septennial Act in 1734 Wyndham observed, 'It is an old maxim that every man has his price.' Sheridan in 1794 spoke of 'the pernicious doctrine that all public men are impostors, and that every politician has his price.' Who first committed himself to this opinion it would be impossible to say, but one need not be surprised to find it amongst the proverbs of Solomon. Nothing could be more cynical than Wyndham's application of the theory: he recommended triennial Parliaments on the ground that votes would have to be bought at fewer years' purchase, and that the price would consequently be so far enhanced as to become prohibitive: therefore the practice would be checked.

Walpole indeed was known to his generation as a briber, and not altogether without cause. Lord Stair wrote of his 'general rule that there is really no such thing as virtue, and that every man will do everything if you will but pay him his price:' but this is not conclusive evidence. Walpole was credited with having

* Hervey, i. 242.

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said that he never knew any woman who would not take money except one noble lady, and she took diamonds; but that lays down a different principle. He lived in an age of bribery, and there were bribers long after his day. Roberts, who was Secretary to the Treasury under Pelham, told a friend of Wraxall's that he kept a secret ledger in which were entered the stipends varying from 500*l.* to 800*l.* which he was instructed to pay to a number of Members of Parliament. In 1747 Horace Walpole wrote to Conway: 'All England under some name or other is just now to be bought and sold. I know nothing of my own election, but I suppose it is over.' In 1763 it is recorded that Fox, in one morning, paid away 25,000*l.* in securing votes for carrying the Peace of Paris: the lowest item in this account was a banknote for 200*l.* Walpole boasted of having defeated the motion for an increase in the Prince of Wales's income at so small a cost as two bribes of 500*l.* and 400*l.*, both of which were already due for previous services. He is credited with having stifled the agitation of Dissenters by wholesale bribery. Hervey, indeed, says of him that 'no man knew better among those he had to deal with who was to be had, on what terms, by what methods, and how the acquisition would answer.' Bubb Dodington, having transferred his allegiance in 1741, told his new friend, the Duke of Argyle, that the 'wonderful expedient of bribery and corruption in private is one of the great arts by which [Walpole] shows his superior genius.' It need not cause us to wonder if, indeed, Walpole looked for a man's soft spot in his venality. One of his own most inexorable critics and most persistent pursuers was Waller; yet we are told at a later

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date, that 'even the stubborn patriotism of Waller was mollified by the promise of a lucrative post.' It is only fair to add that we read elsewhere that 'Waller was so deaf that he could not understand anybody whose voice he was not used to,' and that presumably there was no other form of argument or persuasion to which he was susceptible.

Chesterfield, in his 'Characters,' speaks but poorly of Walpole's principles: 'He would do mean things for profit, and never thought of doing great ones for glory.' He accuses him of being open to flattery, and pays him a double-edged compliment in describing him as the ablest manager of Parliament that ever lived.

To set against all this we have the famous assertion of Burke: 'He was far from governing by corruption. He governed by party attachments. The charge of systematic corruption is less applicable to him, perhaps, than to any minister who ever served the crown for so great a length of time.' In fact Walpole was neither the inventor of bribery nor its most unscrupulous practitioner. If he bribed, he only did so of necessity and in accordance with custom. To him it probably seemed no worse than promising a baronetcy or a peerage seems to our own Prime Ministers. At all events, one opponent saw in this respect no occasion for reproach: all first ministers had been faulty, said the Duke of Argyle, but Sir Robert had the least faults of any minister with whom he had ever been concerned.

Nor can it be shown that Sir Robert was personally greedy. He had a respectable private fortune; a long-drawn official salary, and every facility for supplementing

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that by illicit means put him in the position of growing vastly rich, had he suffered from the mercenary hunger of Fox. But he cared not for accumulations and he died in debt. When Bothmar, the Hanoverian Minister, died in 1740, George II. offered 10 Downing Street, which was Crown property, to Walpole as a personal gift. He refused, and secured it for the perpetual enjoyment of succeeding Prime Ministers.

To another bad habit he must be held to have succumbed. Nepotism was the admitted privilege of all men in high office. When he retired with Townshend after his first short spell of office, he frankly admitted that he had endeavoured 'to serve his friends and relations.' The following letter to Lord Chancellor King indicates the spirit in which he attended to all matters affecting the interests of his family.

'My Lord,—I am afraid you will think me a hackney solicitor about Church preferments, but my friends will make me the canal to your Lordships favour, which must plead my excuse. I have just received an account that the vicarage of Lostwithiel in Cornwall is vacant. My son being now chosen for that borough makes my troubling your Lordship more excusable, and begging that you will not be engaged for this vacancy till I receive my instructions in whose behalf I shall be obliged to receive your Lordships favour,

'I am very truly,

'Your Lordships most faithful humble servant,,

'R. WALPOLE.'

Mr. Lecky exposes his achievements in this direction.

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without mercy. When Walpole retired, he says, 'He had bestowed upon his sons permanent offices, chiefly sinecures, amounting to 15,000*l.* a year, and had obtained the title of Baron for his eldest son, and the orders of the Bath and Garter for himself. He now procured the title of the Earl of Orford and a pension of 4000*l.*; and for his illegitimate daughter, rank and precedence of an Earl's daughter.' He adds that Walpole was forced to relinquish the pension under protest, but that it was resumed after an interval of two years. Of the Earldom there is certainly no cause to complain, and the custom of the day might well admit of a pension at the close of so long a term of public service. As for the deliberate nepotism, we can only appeal to the standard of honour then and long afterwards in existence. As late as 1807 there was an inquiry into sinecure offices, and Lord Holland reports that Lord Ellenborough, who has several lucrative offices of that sort in his gift, complained of its taking from the Chief Justice the only recompense for his services, which 'consists in having the means to provide for his children.' Nobody, indeed, can be said to have dipped deeper into the public purse for the benefit of his children than Lord Holland's grandfather. Sir George Trevelyan states that Charles Fox lost gambling 140,000*l.* in the course of three years; and it may be not unfairly said that this debt was liquidated at the expense of the taxpayer. Lord Holland had provided for his children's needs.

It must be said again that Walpole's theory of politics was based solely upon the preservation of peace. He regarded war as an unmitigated evil, only to be waged

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under irresistible pressure from within or from without. It was perhaps an affectation to deny his own competence to deal with such an undertaking—a pose assumed to cover his reluctance. No doubt he acted deliberately and not at all in ignorance. That he studied international relations in a philosophic spirit may be inferred from this passage from a speech in which a phrase well known to us is introduced: 'We were not in honour obliged to take any share in the war which the Emperor brought upon himself in the year 1733, nor were we in interest obliged to take a share in that war, as long as neither side attempted to push its conquest further than was consistent with the balance of power in Europe, which was a case that did not happen.' Sir Robert Wilmot, writing to the Duke of Devonshire in January 1742, reports: 'Sir Robert exceeded himself; he particularly entered into foreign affairs and convinced even his enemies that he was thoroughly master of them.'

Thackeray pays him a grudging tribute of praise: 'He was a dissolute tipsy cynic, but he saved us from Roman Catholics and wars,' is his summary.* Mrs. Oliphant is even less gracious:† according to her he was 'more honest, true, and worthy than he meant to be to keep himself in power he was a patriot by accident.' And if Walpole's theory of politics was the preservation of peace, his practice was tenure of power. To have and to hold office was his constant aim, and he would risk principle at times to ensure it. Mr. Harrison denounces his surrender to the war party as 'a gross

* *Four Georges.*

† *Historical Sketches of the Reign of George II.*

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sacrifice of principle.' It is true he sacrificed office for the sake of principle when he refused to survive Townshend's dismissal; but he may well have purposely stepped back then to spring the further.

If his ambition was selfish and his tenacity in office excessive, at all events he had much justification and excuse. One would like to claim for him the character of 'the greatest member of Parliament,' conferred by Mr. Gladstone on Sir Robert Peel. Walpole was a born Prime Minister by common consent, from George I., who declared he never had his equal in business, to the Tory Johnson, who complained 'we are governed by the Cabinet, but there is no one head there since Sir Robert Walpole's time.' Ewald in his biography says: 'He was the first of English statesman to recognise the advantages of a united Cabinet, and he gave proof of the light in which he regarded the influence of the House of Commons by being the the first of our line of premiers who resigned office in obedience to an adverse vote of the Lower House. With the career of Sir Robert Walpole begins the history of the faults and the advantages, the patriotism and the selfishness of Government by Parliament.'

We have seen that Lord Morley confirms this opinion: nevertheless the first statement needs qualifying. It can hardly be said that Walpole presided over homogeneous Cabinets as we understand them. He did not secure unanimity until he had shaken off some colleagues of strong mind and independent habit. He could manage such men as Newcastle, Harrington, and Hervey. On the other hand, Carteret, Chesterfield, Pulteney, and

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Argyle had served with him in various capacities and for various periods; but in each case a rupture was inevitable. Whoever might be his colleagues and whatsoever the constitutional position of Cabinet Ministers, he must be decidedly *primus inter pares*. It is noteworthy that the text-books are apt to open a column for the name of the Prime Ministers when Walpole comes upon the scene. That he very greatly enhanced the influence and strength of the House of Commons is undoubted, and to this extent he left a definite mark in our history. He was even a little awed by the power that he had generated, and felt that the House of Commons was like fire—a very good servant and a very bad master. ‘The weakest part of his character and policy,’ thought Hervey, ‘was on all occasions, let the wrong be never so extensive, or the circumstances of it so flagrant, to oppose all Parliamentary inquiry.’ He was in fact something of a Tory at heart. He once wrote to Pelham, ‘I will neither like nor dislike anything on account of persons, but support to my utmost what is, because I think in my conscience there can be no change but for the worse.’ His dislike of innovation has been noted by other writers.

Democratic, as we understand the word, he certainly was not. Yet he was not timid. He displayed personal courage during the Excise Riots. Moral courage was needed to risk the favour of George II. and Caroline by constantly opposing their inclination to mix in European complications. He regarded George as a political coward in contrast with himself. Yet he was assailable. On one occasion, certainly, an anonymous letter threatening

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assassination and ending with a demand for money extracted a rather pusillanimous compliance: he paid. Walpole was before all things a merry soul: 'He laughed the heart's laugh,' was the graphic phrase of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams: and one reads with pain the familiar account, which has already been quoted, of his clouded ending. He loved sport, and wine, and joviality. His beagles were his great joy until he grew too fat to hunt: He even instituted the parliamentary *non-dies* on Saturdays in order that he might not be deprived of his sport. He had no graces whatever. He bought pictures without any real appreciation, partly to rival and vex his brother-in-law. To Waldegrave he once wrote, 'I thank you for the trouble you have given yourself about the pictures: I have no thoughts about any of them.' He had no true literary taste. He never wholly merged the character of the market-going squire in the King's Minister, and he never lost his country accent. He was utterly different from his dilettante son. He exhibited neither dislike nor deep affection for Horace; but he was not, for that matter, any more demonstrative towards his elder son. Horace treated him with becoming duty and admiration, but the contrast was so acute that it was confidently alleged that the parentage was irregular. It is not impossible. Walpole's domestic life was not regular. He lived for years with Maria Skerritt, whom he subsequently married, and for her illegitimate child he impudently sought and obtained the rank of an Earl's daughter.

Hervey said of Sir Robert, even in their friendly days, that he was 'certainly a very ill-bred man.' Lord Shelburne used to tell a curious story in proof of this.

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Travelling once in his coach, Walpole required lights. Using the vulgar speech he ask for links, where polite people would have said flambeaux. His servants being polite people, and not rightly interpreting his wishes, stowed in his carriage some links of sausages—as was the trade-measurement of the day. Sentiment, as Lord Shelburne said, was certainly alien from his nature. When John, Duke of Argyle, died in 1743, Walpole's letter to his brother and heir was in the strangest possible taste: 'I condole with you on the losse of a brother; and having discharged that debt of ceremony, give me leave to congratulate your grace upon every accession of honour.'

But with all his faults—and to the age in which he lived these must in some measure be ascribed—he was a great man and, with all his grossness, even a lovable man. One would perhaps choose rather to have met Carteret or Chesterfield, but one cannot help thinking that of all the group one would have liked Walpole best. Let us leave him with this eulogy pronounced on him by Governor Pownall, a temperate Whig and a sagacious critic: 'Although he acquired a high degree of power, and possessed a degree of influence which would have enabled him as a man to do anything; yet, under every provocation that can exasperate, *he never did an injury*, scarce ever revenged one. He had a magnanimity above all the resentments of the private man. On the contrary, from the suggestions of the same magnanimity, he spared the lives and fortunes of many who had forfeited both, and who would have taken his. He did many kind things to irreconcilable enemies, and conferred many benefits on

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ungrateful friends. . . . His enemies, to their eternal infamy and dishonour, established upon their own inquisition this only fact, that they had been for twenty years writing, speaking, and acting upon ground that was false.'

CHESTERFIELD:
THE INEFFECTIVE MINISTER.

CHESTERFIELD : THE INEFFECTIVE MINISTER

THE name of Chesterfield suggests to most people the superlative degree of elegance, the final arbitrament upon questions of fashion and taste. His figure is vaguely outlined in retrospect as something supremely dignified; his character is tainted with traditions of an easy, even a low morality.

It is remarkable that he has not done more frequent duty in fiction. He would afford a convenient type for a great gentleman; his assumed principle of wickedness is often found to be alluring. The most familiar representation of him in this respect is Sir John Chester in *Barnaby Rudge*; but it is not one of Dickens's successes, and we are left with little more than the impression of a man of supercilious manners, who frequently uses a gold toothpick.

Contemporary records do not testify to any personal advantages. Ben Ashurst called him a stunted giant. We are told that he was a Polyphemus, with a head too large for his body. He is said to have had black teeth. At the age of sixty he confesses that his teeth have given him much trouble, and are now falling out, owing to neglect in early life. George II., when Chesterfield was out of

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favour, jeered at his boasted gallantries, 'as if any woman could like a dwarf baboon.'

The painters have treated him better, and Gainsborough's portrait at Chevening either flatters him or discredits such verdicts. In this noble picture the expression is not amiable, but the face is full of strength. The features are patrician; his eyes are penetrating, and the whole aspect is one of command. The sunk mouth betrays the lack of teeth, so that it may not be a false impression in other ways. In the National Portrait Gallery he appears twice, in less good pictures. Hoare unquestionably meant to paint a handsome face. Allan Ramsay shows him as an older man, and with less engaging features; but, even so, he has a marked advantage over his contemporaries and neighbours, whose fat cheeks and double chins are uniform, and who seldom display any striking individuality. No man ever devoted more thought and words to manner and deportment, and Chesterfield was frankly proud of his own excellence. In 1751 he moved in the House of Lords a Bill for the adoption of the Gregorian Calendar, which had already been put in use by nearly all the Continental nations. He tells his son that he knew nothing of the technical and scientific questions involved; these he left to Lord Macclesfield to explain; he relied on the grace of his eloquence, and the ingenuity of his appeal to the vanity and ignorance of his audience, and his success, he says, was complete.

He relates with conscious pride how he out-manceuvred the French Minister at the Hague by his tact and powers of persuasion; yet we read that when he presented a message of congratulation to the Queen, on the occasion

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of the marriage of the Princess Royal, his 'speech was well written and well got by heart, and yet delivered with a faltering voice, a face as white as a sheet, and every limb trembling with concern'—signs of awkwardness and bad breeding such as his philosophy particularly abhorred.

His title to rank amongst wits is less in dispute. Horace Walpole, who did not love him, said that 'it was not his fault if he had not wit; nothing exceeded his efforts in that point.' Speaker Onslow was less captious: 'He was esteemed,' he says, 'the wittiest man of his time, and of a sort that has scarcely been known since the reign of King Charles the Second.' It would be unfair to pluck out samples for inspection here; one or two of his quips and phrases will appear presently.

As an orator he cannot have entirely mistaken his powers. Even Horace Walpole had to admit that the finest speech he had ever listened to was one from Lord Chesterfield. His courtesy may have been formal and theatrical, but it was impressive. His dying speech may be recorded as 'Give Dayrolles a chair.' His old friend had come to his bedside at the last moment, and, as the doctor declared, 'his good breeding quitted him only with life.'

Philip Dormer Stanhope was born in 1694, and succeeded his father as fourth earl in 1726. He owed little to the care of his parents, and was indebted for his only tending to his grandmother, Lady Halifax. At Trinity College, Cambridge, he appears to have acquired a genuine love of learning, and left, he tells us, a pedant. After this he went abroad, and found himself at ease in foreign society. In 1715 he was appointed a gentleman of the bedchamber

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to the Prince of Wales, afterwards George II., and entered Parliament as member for St. Germans. He made a speech and voted, upon which he was warned that, being under age, he was liable to severe penalties. He discreetly departed to Paris, and no steps were taken to punish him. In 1722 he changed his seat for Lostwithiel. In 1723 he was appointed Captain of the Gentlemen Pensioners, and two years later Walpole offered him the Bath, when the the Order was revived. Stanhope's ambition rose higher than these degrees; he refused the decoration, and exhibited his resentment towards the Minister so ostentatiously that he soon found himself out of office.

When his master, the Prince, became King, his prospects improved. He was made a lord of the bedchamber and a Privy Councillor, and he was nominated to the embassy at the Hague. In 1730 he came home to receive the Garter and to be installed as Lord Steward—a sinecure appointment which did not prevent him from returning to his post abroad. Here he had established for himself a considerable reputation, and Horace Walpole, the elder, writes to his brother, ‘I hope Lord Chesterfield will lose no time in hastening to Holland. His credit is so great with the Pensionary that to be sure he will be able to know his real sentiments . . . and his sense is so good that he will be able to make a right use of that knowledge.’ His diplomacy was so far successful that the second Treaty of Vienna was signed in 1731; in the following year he resigned his office, and came home. Meanwhile he had formed a connection with a Madame de Bouchet, and in 1732 was born his son, Philip, the hero, or the victim, of the famous letters.

In 1733 two important events affected Chesterfield's

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career. In his dislike of Walpole he actively opposed the Excise proposals in Parliament, for which he was punished by ignominious dismissal from the office of Lord Steward; and he married Melusina Schulenburg. This lady was nominally the niece of Madame Schulenburg, whom George I. had created Duchess of Kendal. So much reason, however, had the late King given for ascribing a closer relationship, that he had created her Lady Walsingham, and, it was understood, had left her a sum of money in his will. Chesterfield married her only as a matter of business. She was older than he. His comment on his mother-in-law and her rival, or colleague, Kilmansegge, had been that they were two considerable specimens of the King's bad taste and strong stomach; and there is no evidence that his bride surpassed her mother in personal attractions. They never lived together, but he seems to have treated her becomingly in public, and she seems to have accepted the situation meekly. It brought trouble upon Chesterfield in two ways. From the outset of his career he had been guilty of a blunder, unworthy of so shrewd a diplomatist. He had staked his interests upon Mrs. Howard, the Prince of Wales's favourite, instead of confiding them to Caroline, his wife. The Princess had resented the insult; the Queen was able to punish the offence. This audacious alliance with illegitimate royalty aggravated her resentment, and Chesterfield had for an enemy the most intimate, and not the least wise, of the King's councillors. But he was further involved with the King. When George I. died, his son and heir, finding his father's will distasteful, put it either into his pocket or the fire. At all events, it was not forthcoming. When the Duchess of Kendal died in 1743,

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Chesterfield claimed 40,000*l.* in his wife's name, as beneficiary under the terms of this document, and entered an action against his sovereign. As a compromise he received 20,000*l.*, which may appear to have justified his venture; but it makes the whole transaction sordid and ignoble; and, what undoubtedly was a matter of greater concern to him, it completed his discredit and disfavour at court. He had taken a prominent part in opposition since his downfall in 1733. Amongst other attacks he had gained applause, which has reached our ears, for his speech against the Stage Censorship Bill of 1737; and in this course of conduct he found some reward, for the Duchess of Marlborough, dying in 1744, left him 20,000*l.* for having been the enemy of those whom she hated.

Walpole fell: parties were in confusion; and in spite of the odium which he had invited and incurred, Chesterfield was not a figure to be ignored. In 1744 he was admitted to the Broadbottom Administration, and became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Here he achieved the conspicuous success of his life. The times were evil: the Jacobites were to make their final effort next year. It was asserted that the Roman Catholics in Ireland would join in the rebellion unless they were rigorously repressed. Chesterfield was unmoved. His declared ambition was to be known as the Irish Lord-Lieutenant, not Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. He would trust the people, favouring no class, oppressing none. He told pretty Miss Ambrose that she was the only really dangerous Papist he had seen in the country. When he was awoke with the alarming intelligence that the Papists were about to rise, he expressed his entire approval: it was nine o'clock and high time; he

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was about to get up himself. He was either lucky or wise. Peace was preserved, and Chesterfield is remembered as one of the few Lord-Lieutenants who have ever succeeded in pleasing both the British Government and the people of Ireland. A native poet later lamented over his country as

Uncheered by one benignant ray
Since Chesterfield's unclouded day,
When last perhaps was clearly shown
The bright distinction of a throne.

Lord Stanhope attributes his success to the fact that he was the first Lord Lieutenant since the revolution to make the office one of active exertion. The Viceroys were often absentees; seldom active administrators. The Duke of Shrewsbury (1713-17) had complained that there was business enough to keep him from falling asleep, and not enough to keep him awake. Chesterfield declared that the Duke of Dorset, his predecessor, had failed by leaving business to others: 'It was my doing the whole myself, without either favourite, minister, or mistress, that made my administration so smooth and quiet.'

Before going to Dublin he had been sent on a special mission to the Hague, where the situation demanded his knowledge and influence. He was again successful. He outwitted the French envoy, as he afterwards related exultingly to his son, and came back in triumph within six months. In 1746 he became Secretary of State for the Northern Department, when his kinsman, Lord Harrington, retired, but he only held the seals for two years. The persevering Duke of Newcastle, was more than a match for Chesterfield, who wrote: 'I am but a commis.' His pride would not endure a subserviency which not all his adroitness

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could avert, and he left office never to return. To the Duke he gave as his reason for resigning that the promise made of Colonel Stanhope's appointment as aide-de-camp to the King had not been redeemed. To the King himself he assigned the plea of ill-health, upon which Lord Marchmont bluntly asked whether his Majesty was dull enough to take it as the real one. So far had he re-established his character and position that he was offered a dukedom, which, for some unrecorded reason, he declined. Out of twenty-two years spent in public life he had only been in office during six. He was not more than fifty-four years of age, but he had had enough. Moreover, he grew deaf. It is not clear that this was an insuperable bar to further enterprise: it may have afforded sufficient pretext for retirement; but Mr. Frederic Harrison decides that 'this able and honest man was permanently debarred from office by incurable deafness.' He did not immediately disappear, nor did he throw away all concern with public affairs. Both King and ministers appreciated his experience and sagacity, and he exercised in retirement some of that influence which has been the solace or disturbance of many a fallen minister. And he remained a conspicuous figure at White's, whence he was accustomed to return to Chesterfield House with an escort of armed servants to protect him from any footpads who might feel disposed to ascertain whether he had been lucky at play.

But the true interest of his life was now centred in the career of his son. Philip Stanhope was born, as we have seen, in 1732. What became of the mother it is not easy to say; Chesterfield's biographers tell us nothing. In the letters we find allusion to 'your Mama'; but, inasmuch as

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Lady Chesterfield was on friendly terms with the boy, this may refer to her. From his childhood Philip was the object of his father's devoted attention, and it is through the series of letters by which his education was attempted that Chesterfield has won most of his celebrity. The boy was to be made perfect, to fulfil the ideal of an extravagant fancy. It is often represented that this scheme was the outcome of unselfish love; that all the tenderness of a worldly nature was lavished on one idol; that out of the profusion of his own store Chesterfield yielded everything in the service of his darling boy. It would be nearer the truth to say that pride induced him to try and force out of inadequate material the fulfilment of his darling dreams. His imagination fashioned a consummate being, a scholar, a courtier, a wit, a dandy, a statesman, a diplomatist, the glass of fashion, the embodiment of all the talents and all the graces. 'The Graces, the Graces, remember the Graces!' was his constant cry. Unhappily, his pupil was a lout.

There was no stage or event of life where excellence was not required. Philip was sent to Westminster, where he appears to have given no remarkable signs of intelligence; but the discipline was relentless. 'I wish you even played cricket better than any boy in the school,' writes the parent. Then came foreign travel with a tutor, and the storm of letters burst upon Philip's head. We have none of his replies; from the comments on the father's side we may infer that he was, or feigned to be, content, although he could not conceal his disgust at a slovenly handwriting. But one cannot fail to picture to oneself an amiable youth, anxious to please, yet conscious of his own shortcomings,

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persecuted and exasperated by reiterated injunctions to a course of life and a standard of perfection which he knew to be unattainable, and probably held to be unnecessary.

He appears to have written in terms of gratitude and affection to his loving tormentor, but he need have been under no delusion as to his reliance on affection. 'If I do not meet with perfection, or at least something very near it, you and I shall not be very well together,' writes Chesterfield. And again: 'Hitherto you have had every proof of my affection, because you have deserved it; but when you cease to deserve it, you may expect every mark of my resentment.' He is warned that there is no chance of escape; the tutor dare not send reports unduly indulgent; moreover, Chesterfield has his spies abroad: 'I shall have constant accounts of your behaviour from Comte Salmour . . . my particular friend.' He has an extensive acquaintance, and can employ as many eyes as Argus. Travellers, too, will be coming home. Sir Charles Hanbury Williams 'puffed you extremely,' but admitted awkwardness of manner; upon which comes most serious admonition, and the old cry of 'The Graces, the Graces!' 'Your dancing master is at this time the man in all Europe of the greatest importance to you,' he writes on one occasion.

No details are too trivial. Exact instructions are forwarded for cleaning the teeth and finger-nails, and decent blowing of the nose. The exact value of the titles Monsieur, Milord, Madame, and Mademoiselle are explained, with the elementary information that every married woman is, in French, Madame, and every unmarried one, Mademoiselle. The right manner of adjusting a shoe-buckle and the necessity of keeping stockings taut are not forgotten.

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He may smile and must never be morose, but audible laughter is forbidden, 'in my mind there is nothing so illiberal and ill-bred'; it is the vulgar habit of the mob. Please the ears and eyes of people, and you will win their hearts. Don't drop your hat on the floor nor your fork into your plate. Articulate carefully; never mutter. The Graces, the Graces!

Irritating as this incessant counsel must have been, it was harmless and just; but even the good breeding of Chesterfield seems to be at fault when he hears that Philip is to dine with Lord Orrery, and urges him to be particularly 'well-bred.' It suggests that best manners need only be put on for state occasions.

So long as Philip is in the state of pupilage, and is addressed as 'dear boy,' the amount of reading prescribed is prodigious. When he approaches man's estate and becomes 'dear friend,' books are to be laid aside and the world is to be his constant study. Greek scholarship is the test of a fully-educated man. Latin is essential, but 'remember that great modern knowledge is still more necessary than the ancient, and that you had better know perfectly the present than the old state of Europe, though I would have you well acquainted with both.'

Incessant, indefatigable labour is imperative and on no account to be avoided. Philip is to know everything about every country, besides the literature of all the ages. Amongst other facts demanded concerning Saxony, this seems of doubtful use to an Englishman: 'If two subjects of the Elector's are at law for an estate, in what court must this suit be tried, and will the decision of the court be final, or does there lie an appeal . . . ?' There is to be no

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limit to the range of Philip's acquirements, yet the mentor more than once gives an opening for retort: he confesses that he found Dante difficult to understand, so he left him alone: 'he was not worth the pains necessary to understand him.' Again, when he introduced his Bill for reforming the Calendar, he admits that he did not understand his subject, and rather than inform himself, he relied, as we have seen, on his eloquence and his friends the Graces.

To give Chesterfield his due, much of his advice is admirable: 'The invariable practice of virtue and the indefatigable pursuit of knowledge' are principles above criticism. 'Follow nature and not fashion,' is an excellent precept, unless we are obliged to interpret it to mean, 'Be nature's masterpiece; lead fashion; don't follow it.' Amongst 'rational pleasures' he places first, 'proper charities to real and compassionate objects of it.' It would be ungenerous to read into this a love of playing the patron's part. Gambling, dissipation, and debauchery are entirely condemned, but not upon strictly moral grounds. They are false pleasures, and result respectively in financial trouble, headache, and injured health.

It is certain that many people think of Chesterfield's letters as an apology for immoral living. Let us see how far this impression is true. Virtue and avoidance of low intrigues he certainly enjoins, but the merit of this preaching is impaired when we find him explaining that 'an arrangement' is essential to every lady of fashion, and that it is a sad confession of failure if Philip cannot boast an attachment, and a shocking lack of taste if he contents himself with a companion equally devoid of morals and quality. 'Est-il question de fléchir par vos soins et par

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vos attentions les rigueurs de quelque fière Princesse ?' he inquires insinuatingly. The life of pleasure is only part of the complete existence, 'a commerce gallant, insensibly formed with a woman of fashion.' Manly virtue he nowhere defines ; but he lets us know that 'it is possible for a woman to be virtuous though not strictly chaste' : she is guilty of nothing but 'mere bodily frailties.' Worse than this is his assertion that 'the better half of the Duke of Marlborough's greatness and riches were due to the Graces' : they secured him the distinction of being kept by the Duchess of Cleveland. It is difficult to imagine a more offensive application of his favourite doctrine.

Little less appropriate to the forming of a virtuous mind are his observations on the married state and domestic relations. 'It is seldom a misfortune to be fatherless and as seldom a misfortune to be childless,' he writes, and if the second half of the sentiment conveys a dubious compliment, the first may conceivably have stirred the reader to hearty acquiescence. 'The only lasting peace between a man and his wife is, doubtless, separation' : here, no doubt, he did but preach what he practised. 'In this country marriage is not well understood,' he says again. One cannot quite love the writer of such sentences. It is always alleged that the letters were written with no thought of publicity. Even if this be strictly true, Chesterfield can never have been simple and unstudied ; certainly not when he dealt with such a serious subject as the Graces. Upon the whole, they must rank as good letters, and they deserve to be read with the other relics of an art in which all lovers of literature rejoice, and which, for some unaccountable reason, appears to have perished. His taste is not always faultless :

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the Graces nodded when they allowed him to remind his son of the 'prodigious quantity of manure' that had been laid upon him; nor does he always observe his own standard of chastity in phrasing, as when he writes: 'It is now forty years since I have never spoken without time to consider.'

But apart from matter, the manner is easy and agreeable. 'There are many sentences which are worth considering and recollecting. It is no bad maxim for a politician that he should cultivate 'dexterity enough to conceal a truth without telling a lie.' 'If people had no vices but their own, few would have so many as they have,' he declares, as an inducement to refrain from complying with the invitations of unworthy companions. 'Every man should do something that will deserve to be written, or write something that will deserve to be read,' is an admirable sermon on ambition. And this, if not a high estimate of friendship, is none the less a just definition of friends as a loose expression: 'No man can hope to have half a dozen intimate and confidential friends in the whole course of his life. I mean friends . . . who speak well of you and who would rather do you good than harm, consistently with their own interests and no further.' And amongst the evidences of his keen perception of the world around him, this observation upon the condition of France is worth noting: 'I foresee that before the end of this century the trade of both King and Priest will not be half so good a one as it has been.' Incidentally it may be observed that he was willing to honour the trade of the King for the present, for he writes to Voltaire: 'Donnez nous à présent l'histoire du plus grand et du plus honnête Homme de

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l'Europe, que je croirois dégrader en appellant Roi . . . sa gloire n'exigeant pas votre invention poétique, mais pouvant se reposer en toute sûreté sur votre vérité historique ; which is perhaps pushing the art of pleasing as far as it can conveniently go without lapsing into adulation.

In connection with this manner of addressing Voltaire, it will be convenient to notice the legend of Chesterfield's insolence towards a man of letters nearer home. Dr. Johnson, with all his turbulent independence of thought and word, was a Tory and no leveller. He had not scrupled to wait upon him, and believed himself to have been treated with ignominy. A picture in our National Gallery represents the Doctor detained in the ante-room whilst courtiers are admitted to audience. When he published his Dictionary he prefaced it with a vindictive and stilted address to Chesterfield, containing this reproach: 'The notice you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind ; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it ; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it ; till I am known, and do not want it.' Chesterfield received this with good humour and showed no resentment. He declared himself innocent, and said that if the Doctor had been 'repulsed from his door,' as he alleged, it was the servant's fault for not announcing that he was there. Probably this is the true explanation. Chesterfield was not a despiser of books and authors as was King George ; and when Johnson met him later, his asperity was to some extent softened. 'His manner,' he admitted, 'was exquisitely elegant and he had more knowledge than I expected.' Boswell: 'Did

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you find, sir, his conversation to be of a superior style?' Johnson: 'Sir, in the conversation which I had with him I had the best right to superiority, for it was upon philology and literature.'

We return to the Letters and what came of them. At the age of eighteen Philip Stanhope was attached to Albemarle's Embassy in Paris. There was a possibility of his appointment as Resident at Venice, but objection was raised to his illegitimate birth, and the father endured his first serious vexation. In 1754 he became Member of Parliament for Liskeard: he made a speech, and Chesterfield must have realised that he was doomed to disappointment. Philip failed. In 1756 he went as Resident to Hamburg, and afterwards to Dresden. In 1768 he died, and Chesterfield sustained a double wound. His great scheme fell away to nothing: his devoted labours were nullified: the ambition of his life was thwarted. But worse remained behind. Poor Philip doubtless remembered the promises of resentment which were to wait upon misconduct, and he believed in them. He had married, and had not dared to tell his 'Friend.' In this dark hour Chesterfield appears at his best: he wins our pity and forces our esteem. He made no querulous complaint, and refrained from visiting the sins of the father upon the widow and children. He adopted them all.

To Mrs. Stanhope he admitted an instinctive mistrust of widows, worthy of Mr. Weller, but he gallantly allowed that she was an exception to the rule. He speaks affectionately of 'our two boys,' and addresses to them pretty letters, amiable and free from the old tone of prescription. But there was nothing to replace the lost interest.

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He turned his attention to his nephew and godson, who was his heir, and wrote letters to him; but his heart was not in his work. They have been edited by Lord Carnarvon, who points out that the repetition of the old rules and principles laid down for Philip show how exact was Lord Chesterfield's memory, and how firmly established were his convictions; but he adds that it is upon the 'Letters to his Son' that his literary fame must depend. Doctor Johnson, to be sure, condemned these as combining the morals of a whore with the manners of a dancing-master; but, as we know, he was a prejudiced critic. We have seen that they are in some ways offensive both in spirit and letter; but, when all is discounted, there remains a balance in their favour which fully justifies their preservation.

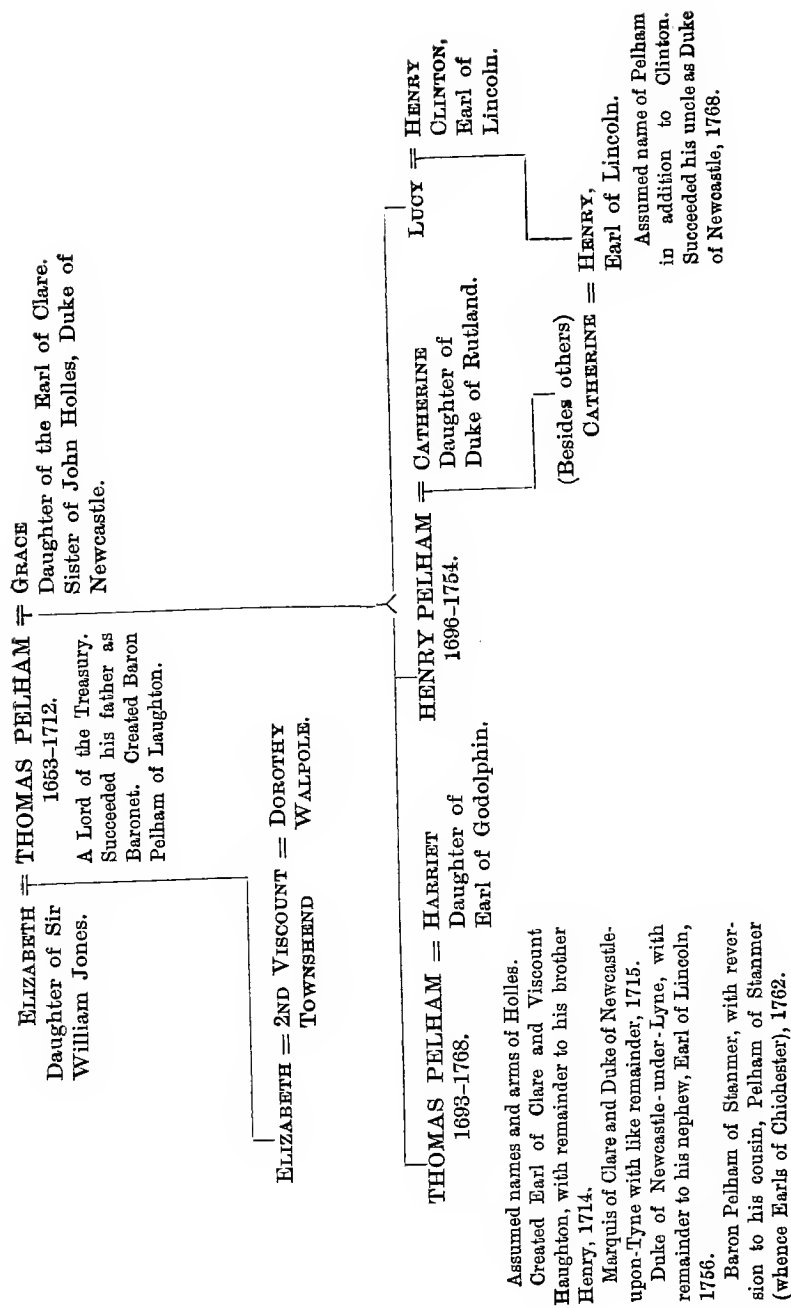
Chesterfield was now old, deaf, gouty, and alone. He let go all contact with the world, 'Tyrawley and I,' he writes, 'have been dead these two years, but we do not choose to have it known.' He had long forsaken the Court. It is not evident that the King had ever loved him, in spite of their reconciliation. George II. did not resemble Charles II. in appreciating wit, and Chesterfield had not spared his master. When one of his recommendations was met with the avowal that 'I would rather admit the devil,' he respectfully assented, but took leave to point out that the minister in question was addressed as his Majesty's trusty and well-beloved cousin. What little joking was allowed at Court, King George liked to do himself. Nor does it appear that Chesterfield was an ardent admirer and loyal supporter of his Sovereign. The best way of getting rid of the Pretender, he had said, was to make him King of Hanover; the people of England would never take another

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one from there. George III. was now upon the throne, and Chesterfield was forgotten. In 1773 he died, in his eightieth year.

Be our judgment what it may, he was certainly not the least conspicuous figure in that group of memorable men who adorned with so much lustre the young Hanoverian dynasty.

THE PELHAMS



NEWCASTLE: THE INDEFATIGABLE MINISTER

THE opposite table will explain all that is necessary for us to know of the family ties of the Pelhams.

It has been said of Lord Carteret that, whilst his public career is patent to all observers, mystery shrouds the circumstances of his private life. Of Newcastle it may be said that, in spite of all we know of his official existence, mystery envelops it from beginning to end. In an age when Pulteney, and Chesterfield, and Carteret, and Fox, and Pitt were condemned to long periods of opposition, Newcastle contrived to occupy the highest posts for forty years, and ended by becoming Prime Minister of England. Diarists and historians have vied with one another in making him a figure of burlesque, and foremost amongst his ludicrous defects we are taught to despise his ignorance. But even here there is room for suspicion that the ridicule is overdone, and that the habit of ascribing everything foolish to a man with an established reputation for folly taints the evidence. Lord Campbell speaks of him as a "place-loving nobleman, hardly gifted with common understanding, and not possessing the knowledge of geography and history now acquired at a parish school." It is alleged that he believed Hanover to lie north of England because it

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le into his department as Secretary for the North. But official dispatches prove that he was not an absolute idiot, and he must have known where the place was to which his Sovereign frequently retired, and whither he eventually went himself. That he looked for Jamaica in the Mediterranean was very likely added by some exaggerating humourist. Less improbable is the story that when he was urged to sanction the fortification of Annapolis, he agreed without demur; he thought it most desirable, but, as an afterthought, inquired, 'Where is Annapolis?' Now, this amounts to the Colonial Secretary of our day seeking to locate on the map Halifax, Nova Scotia. He was not aware that Cape Breton was an island, and it is recorded, to his shame, that he could not take up a challenge in Parliament and defend his Government from comparison with Empson and Dudley. He ought to have known that Cape Breton was an island; unreadiness with the details of Empson and Dudley must, according to other authorities, be charged against Sir Robert Walpole; but we may observe that it would undoubtedly be possible to find Cabinet Ministers of our own day, who have filled their offices without discredit, and who, nevertheless, would have some difficulty, upon sudden emergency, in exactly describing Cape Breton, or giving minute account of the rogueries of the agents of Henry VII. Again: Newcastle has been ridiculed because he confessed surprise at the fact that Berwickshire was a Scottish county, whilst the town of Berwick was reckoned as part of England. In this he merely detected an odd circumstance, which many intelligent people have never noticed at all. If he allowed the impediments of ignorance and diffidence to paralyse his

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official energy, at all events it was not an unmixed evil, according to a subsequent commentator. Lord Broughton* has told us that in 1830 somebody assured him that Newcastle had left in his office a closet full of unopened dispatches from America. His successors took to reading these, and what, so runs the reflection, was the consequence? —the American War.

That he was miserably conscious of his own limitations, and that his diffidence was something more than becoming modesty, we learn from such confessions as these: 'I am always afraid,' he writes to Walpole at Houghton, 'when I have not your assistance and advice . . . my compliments to all your good company and my fellow-sportsmen. . . I must beg you will send me ample instructions upon everything.' The implied claim to be a sportsman savours of pretence rather than humility; but the rest is no doubt sincere. In like tone he appeals to Hardwicke: 'I must beg you to consider in what situation you will leave me, diffident of myself, doubtful without the previous advice and opinion of my friends. . . .' And it must have been in reply to some such pitiful lament that Pelham once wrote to him, 'I must now beg of you, dear brother, not to fret yourself so much on every occasion.' One certainly does not recognise the master-mind in the Minister who, during the period of indecision in 1755, before war was declared with France, recommended that Hawke 'should take a turn in the Channel to exercise the fleet, without having any instructions whatever.'

No doubt he said and did a great many foolish things, and in a most unhappy manner, not unfairly to be called

* *Recollections of a Long Life.*

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eccentric, intensified the impression of his incompetence. He was always in a hurry, both in speech and motion; his habit was fussy and excited. It was said that he always lost an hour in the morning, and was trying to catch it up all day. Hervey wrote, 'We have one minister [Walpole] that does everything with the same seeming ease and tranquillity as if he was doing nothing: we have another [Newcastle] that does nothing, in the same hurry and agitation as if he did everything.' Chesterfield bore the same witness: 'The hurry and confusion of the Duke of Newcastle do not proceed from his business, but from his want of method in it. Sir Robert Walpole, who had ten times the business to do, was never seen in a hurry, because he always did it with method.' Newcastle was a great coward about his health. His fear of catching cold was so acute that on the hottest days in summer he kept the House of Lords stewing, rather than permit a window to be opened. At the funeral of George II. the Duke of Cumberland found himself unaccountably weighed down: this was due to the Duke, who was standing on the Prince's robes in order to avoid the chilly pavement. When he travelled, he sent orders in advance that his bed was to be slept in for purposes of airing. And here is an account of him at a Court ball, on Horace Walpole's authority: 'He went into the hazard room, and wriggled and shuffled and lisped and winked and spied. . . . Nobody went near him, he tried to flatter people that were too busy to mind him; in short, he was quite disconcerted. . . . To finish his confusion and anxiety, George Selwyn, Brand, and I went and stood near him, and in half whispers, that he might hear, said, "Lord! how he is broke! how old he looks!" Then I

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said, "This room feels very cold: I believe there never is a fire in it." Presently afterwards I said, "Well, I'll not stay here; this room has been washed to-day." In short, I believe, we made him take a double dose of Gascoigne's powder when he went home.' Horace Walpole found him first-rate sport: thus he writes in 1754: 'Either grief for his brother's death, or joy for it, had intoxicated him. He flung himself at the King's feet, sobbing and crying, "God bless your Majesty," and lay there howling and embracing the King's knees, with one foot so extended that Lord C——, who was luckily in waiting, begged the standers-by to retire, with "For God's sake, gentlemen, don't look at a great man in distress," endeavoured to shut the door, caught his grace's foot, and made him roar out with pain.' It was known that he could not bear to be alone in the dark, and, for want of better company, would order a footman to spend the night in his room. So great was his dread of the sea, that he could never bring himself to face the voyage to Hanover, until the greater dread of losing influence with the King overcame all others. After all, he may be pardoned for shrinking from the horrors of seasickness.

It was Newcastle's misfortune to be hated by Hervey and chosen as a butt by Walpole: nobody suffered more at the hands of the two leading memoir-writers of the time. Hervey cruelly observes that 'those for whom he spoke generally wished he had been silent, and those who listened always wished so.' Going further he roundly declares that Newcastle had betrayed all his friends in turn, ending with the sacrifice of Walpole to Carteret, and that he 'would betray Lord Carteret to anybody he thought it his interest,

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and does actually betray his King and his master to his son and successor.' Nor was this charge without corroboration. Walpole, for many years his colleague and chief, declared 'his name is perfidy.' Pitt once said that he was 'a very great liar.' There is no doubt that he looked upon intrigue as the inevitable and only principle of success in politics. He and his brother were sincerely fond of one another, but that did not save the Duke from frequent exhibitions of petulance and jealousy: nor was he above seizing a paltry advantage at Pelham's expense. For instance, when he had made sure that Harrington had resigned in 1746, and that the King intended to make Chesterfield Secretary of State, he hastened to proclaim the news for the express purpose of seeming to be first minister, and to step in front of his brother. Lord Campbell, in condemning the character of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, Newcastle's most faithful ally, contrives to kill two birds with one stone by adding, 'he was only not false to the falsest of mankind.' Finally we have Horace Walpole again: 'The Duke of Richmond died; who besides the Duchess and his own dignity, loved the Duke of Newcastle—the only man who ever did.' And as a parting shot, 'he has the monkey disposition of Heliogabalus.'

Whether he resembled Heliogabalus or a monkey, he was certainly an adroit waiter on events. In 1726 Palm, the Emperor's Minister in London, reported to his master that Walpole did not meddle with foreign affairs; he left them to Townshend. No one else had any share in them except the Duke of Newcastle: 'This latter is nothing but a figure of a Secretary of State, being obliged to conform himself in everything to Lord Townshend, who is proprié

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autor et anima negotiorum.' This undignified position he endured as best he could : when Townshend fell, he did not conceal his joy, and opened his heart to Harrington the successor : ' I perceive the advantage in having lost a bad brother, and shall, I am persuaded, soon find that of having a good one. Sir Robert is pure gay, and does like an angel,' he adds, hoping for easier times.

George II. endured the Duke's services for many years, and was to some extent conciliated by his judicious humouring of Hanoverian predilections and preference for a war policy whenever the exigencies of party manœuvres made that possible : but he never entertained a flattering opinion of his servant's capabilities : ' You see I am compelled,' said he, ' to take the Duke of Newcastle to be my Minister, who is not fit to be the chamberlain in the smallest Court in Germany.' So entire was his contempt, indeed, that he did not scruple to insult the Secretary of State in 1735, by bidding him bring any letters that might be addressed by Waldegrave to Walpole unopened. These he would read, seal up again, and send on to Houghton without telling Newcastle their contents. Perhaps the Duke found this indignity comparatively mild : he lived in a world of hide-and-seek, where secret correspondence and concealment from colleagues were a recognised part of the game. In 1737, Lord Waldegrave in Paris was corresponding with the Duke in apparent confidence and detail ; yet in one letter Sir Robert Walpole writes apologetically to the Ambassador, ' It was absolutely necessary to take the Duke of Newcastle into this affair ; your letters to me could not pass unobserved.' In 1741 Walpole never told the Duke of the King's secret treaty at Hanover.

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From all this one would infer that the Duke was a minister of comic opera, to be treated alternately as a joke and a nuisance, quite incapable of understanding what was going on around him. Yet his correspondence does not justify such a conclusion. He may have been wrong in his judgments, and inspired only by prejudice; but these extracts from a letter, chosen at random, do not read like the babbling of a buffoon; nor do they pretend to ignore the strange terms upon which Cabinet colleagues were living.

THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

October 1743.

‘As the King’s return and the meeting of Parliament draw now very near, it will be absolutely necessary for your lordship, my brother, and myself, to consider very maturely what part to take in the present situation of affairs. . . . The entire ignorance in which we have been kept this summer, leave us at full liberty to act as we shall think most proper for the King’s service, the interests of the public, and our own honour. . . . Your lordship very well remembers, how much it was the opinion of many of the Kings servants, and especially yours and mine that, in order to prevent the Crown of France from giving law to all Europe, the Queen of Hungary should, pursuant to our engagements, be supported to the utmost . . . and though some, then in the King’s service, were not so much convinced of the prudence and necessity of this measure, yet it became the measure of the Government. . . . What passed this summer is too well known. The French sent a very considerable army to the borders of the Electorate in

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order to intimidate his Majesty from executing his engagement, as King of England, with the Queen of Hungary. . . . It is also very well known how often we proposed the sending the Danes and Hessians to the Queen of Hungary's assistance; how much we pressed here the accommodation with the King of Prussia; how earnestly we advised the ordering Mr. Trevor to summon the Dutch. . . . Some, indeed, amongst us feared that the rapidity of the success against the Queen of Hungary . . . had made it impracticable to think any more of the support of the House of Austria: whilst others, of which number were always your lordship and myself, though they lamented what had been done at Hanover, were unwilling to give up the game entirely. . . . And I must beg leave here to refer to a paper, which I wrote in November 1741, and sent to your lordship, wherein I believe the very measures which were afterwards taken and followed, were pointed out and proposed, as far as the situation of affairs would permit; and this I have thought necessary to mention that we may not run away with a mistaken notion that the support of the Queen of Hungary, and the measures taken for it, were the single act of my Lord Carteret and his friends.' (Here follows an elaborate review of events upon the Continent.) 'During the whole winter I never ceased pressing Lord Carteret to determine to send an army into Germany. . . . All I could say had no effect, and I never could get him once to be clear that they should go . . . to his irresolution and apprehensions of the consequences that the sending our army to Germany might have, with regard to the Electorate of Hanover, I attribute great part of the misfortunes which have since happened. However, Lord Stair, who had the

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command did, without any order, in the month of February march the whole army towards the Rhine, and, when it was actually upon the march, Lord Carteret then thought it would not be safe to stop.'

The point of this letter, which is very long, is that Carteret had not been loyal to his colleagues, and had subordinated general principles, upon which they were all agreed, to the exclusive consideration of Hanoverian interests for the purpose of securing the King's favour. At the end he declares that vigorous measures after the battle of Dettingen would have forced upon France the acceptance of 'reasonable and proper terms of peace.'

All this may be right or wrong, but nobody need be surprised had the writer been a minister of repute. Nor is evidence lacking to prove that at times he was respectfully treated by men of sense. Whilst Carteret was conducting his unfortunate negotiations for the Vrillière dukedom at Hanover in 1723, his colleague and rival, Townshend, wrote to Walpole that his letters were to be shown to none but the Duke of Newcastle. Townshend had married the Duke's sister, and must have known if he was too intolerably foolish to be trusted. Testimony untainted by family tenderness is afforded by Lord Waldegrave: 'When his friends have been routed,' he says, 'he has still maintained his ground. He has incurred his Majesty's displeasure on various occasions, but has always carried his point . . . it cannot be denied that he possesses some qualities of an able minister.'* And this is un-

* It is right to add that Lord Waldegrave goes on to point out his obvious limitations.

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deniable. It has been observed elsewhere that the Duke had a memorable triumph when he thwarted the diplomacy of Carteret at Hanover, and prevented his proposals from being ratified. He had the satisfaction of securing Carteret's dismissal in 1744. Chesterfield resigned in 1748 because the Duke's policy was distasteful to him and was not to be resisted. Fox refused to lead the House of Commons in 1754, because he found the Duke was determined to be master of his own house in all details:* 'Fox felt that he was bubbled,' said Walpole. The same determination forced Pitt upon the reluctant King in 1757: it made Pitt content to serve under him, and even rendered possible some degree of resistance to the will of his terrible colleague. In 1751 Newcastle had succeeded in manœuvring Sandwich and Bedford out of the Government because he was jealous of them, and introducing Holdernessee as Secretary of State, because he was willing to 'act as his clerk.' This is noteworthy as another instance of carrying his wishes against those of the King, who complained angrily of the Duke's 'impracticable temper,' and treated him with deliberate coolness for 'several weeks.'

It is true that he did not always get his way. In 1739 he had tried to prevent Walpole from making Hervey Lord Privy Seal, and had failed. He then tried to induce his friends in the Cabinet to secede, and failed again. He finally threatened to resign alone; but was easily induced to accept his defeat with as good a grace as possible.

* Newcastle appointed Sir Thomas Robinson instead. Lord Stanhope says, 'It was certainly no light or easy task which the Duke of Newcastle had accomplished—he had succeeded in finding a Secretary of State with abilities inferior to his own.'

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Again, after he had bullied Chesterfield into resigning, he had tried to replace him with Sandwich, who for the moment was in favour. To his disgust he had to put up with the nomination of Bedford. But it is manifest that as a rule he was man enough to assert himself: it certainly cannot be said that he was invariably treated as a dummy.

He was a millionaire duke; consequently there is nothing significant in his having been given a high Court office and the Garter before he was five-and-twenty; but when we find that the University of Cambridge bestowed on him the LL.D. degree and made him their Chancellor, we may hesitate to write him down a half-witted dunce. This learned body might do without a scholar, and Sir George Trevelyan* has denounced as scandalous their willingness to elect such notorious evildoers as Grafton or Sandwich, but they presumably required of their Chancellor that, judged by the accepted standard, he should be accounted a considerable figure in public life. They could afford to waive a certificate of moral integrity; but they would hardly go out of their way to choose a laughing-stock to fill their highest office.

What then was the secret of Newcastle's power—a power sufficiently attested by the evidence of Lord Waldegrave, and quite incomprehensible if he was nothing but a shambling, rambling nonentity, whose actions were usually discreditable and whose utterances were invariably idiotic? It is easy for historians to dismiss him contemptuously as a 'hoary jobber' with Lord Stanhope and J. R. Green, or rest content with Parkman's conclusion that 'he had a feverish craving for place and power, joined to a total

* *Early History of Charles James Fox.*

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unfitness for both.' That does not solve the mystery. Somebody once asserted that the Duke did not want for parts: 'No,' said Lord Talbot, 'for he has done without them for forty years.' Yet Horace Walpole tells us that in 1754 the Cabinet Council gave it as their unanimous opinion to the King that the Duke of Newcastle should be at the head of the Treasury. Walpole's own opinion was that 'industry, perseverance, and intrigue gave him that duration of power, which shining talents and the favour of the Crown could not secure to Lord Granville, nor the first rank in eloquence and the most brilliant services to Lord Chatham.'

It is quite possible that Lord Stanhope half unintentionally hit upon the truth. Newcastle lived in an age when money was almost omnipotent. He was personally free from avarice, and left politics comparatively poor instead of vastly rich: but he knew what wealth could do, and he devoted his private hoards without hesitation to his public engagements. He was, indeed, an honest man as political honour went. In spite of the reprobation which, as we have seen, was his portion, we are entitled to pay attention to Chesterfield, who was a judge of men and had no reason to love the Duke. 'He was,' says he, 'a compound of most human weaknesses, but untainted with any vice or crime.'

Possibly Coxe, in his unimaginative way, comes nearest to the truth: he attributes Newcastle's eminence to 'his princely fortune and profusion of expense, to the high integrity and disinterestedness of his character, and to the uniform support which he gave to the House of Brunswick.'

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It is worth while examining his treatment of his brother. There is no reason to doubt that a true and enduring affection knit them together, and that the Duke's professions of grief when Henry died were perfectly sincere. Indeed he had reason to love him, and had sense enough to know it. He had often taxed his brother's patience, but had never found his friendship and counsel at fault. In 1741, the Duke had lost his temper and declared he would leave the Government, and had persuaded himself that he was a martyr to high principles: 'If ever any one was drove out of an administration for measures, and at present I may say measures only, I am, if I go out now.' Pelham knew his man and replied with gravity: 'You seem to take it a little amiss of me that I should suppose your present uneasiness proceeds from the dislike of persons and not things: I am satisfied that it is from both . . . believe me, dear brother, before this session is at an end you will be as declared an opponent as Lord Carteret or Mr. Pulteney. . . . Whatever you may determine, to my life's end, I shall continue anxious for your honour, concerned for your interest, and a most affectionate and faithful friend and brother.' The Duke did not resign.

As we know, Pelham became head of the Treasury in 1743, and the Duke never scrupled to speak of him as the Prime Minister: yet in his heart there was a seed of jealousy which produced an irrepressible desire to assert himself as head of the family. Thus he wrote enigmatically to his friend Hardwicke: 'My brother has long been taught to think by Lord Orford that he is the only person fit to succeed him, and that he has credit with

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the King upon that foot; and this leads him into Lord Orford's old method of being the first person upon all occasions. This is not mere form; for I do apprehend my brother does think that his superior interest in the closet and situation in the House of Commons give him great advantage over everybody else. They are indeed great advantages; but may be counterbalanced, especially if it is considered *over whom* those advantages are given. I only fling this out and make no remarks upon it.' However, he was not implacable. Before long he was sketching a habit of administration wherein they were to work in perfect concord, settling all matters together before they were submitted to '*any* of our brethren: I always except the Chancellor who, I know, is a third brother.'*

In 1748 there was another crisis: the Duke complained that he was not being treated with proper consideration, and went so far as to hint a doubt of Hardwicke's loyalty. The Chancellor flew to the rescue and adjusted matters with such discretion, that the Duke was very shortly writing to assure Pelham that their little differences were like lovers' quarrels: '*Amantium iræ, amoris integratio est,*' wrote the Chancellor of Cambridge University.

Pelham's refusal, a year or two later, to insist upon Bedford's dismissal by the King, led to further friction and produced savage threats of resignation. Coxe says that the Duke's 'displeasure against his brother was increased to such a degree that all private intercourse between them was suspended.' The situation was so un-

* Elsewhere he speaks of 'my Lord Chancellor, with whom I do everything and without whom I do nothing.'

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comfortable, that it was obvious that the resignation must be carried into effect, or else the quarrel mended. The Duke's affection and, as Coxe naïvely adds, his interests inclined him to the latter course, and a reconciliation was safely concluded—this time through the agency of Lord Lincoln. After one of these passing squalls the Duke declared, in token of his devotion, that to please his brother he was ready to walk bare-footed to Hanover—which his critics might seize upon as evidence that he was not aware that he dwelt upon an island. At all events, their alliance preserved so good a semblance of stability, that we find the King writing to Newcastle: 'You and your brother and the Chancellor are the only real ministers: the rest are ciphers.'

The Duke's adventures as a courtier were not particularly happy. We have seen what a poor figure he cut, according to Horace Walpole. It will not be forgotten that when George I. thrust him upon his son as godfather to a new-born prince, the Duke was publicly insulted and, as some believed, threatened with personal chastisement, by his future sovereign. In course of time he tried his hand at some gallant passages with Princess Amelia, prompted rather by his head than his heart; but he was rudely rebuffed. She knew very well that he was equally ready to pay court to Lady Yarmouth: further, she was a declared partisan of Bedford, whom Newcastle hated.

Whatever his shortcomings may have been, he was doubtless what is known as a man of the world. He had been at Westminster, then not less favoured than Eton as the training ground of the fortunate youth of England. Amongst his contemporaries he could claim as brother

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Westminsters such men as Carteret, Murray, Pulteney, Hervey, and many more, capable of shining in political life had they been placed there. After Cambridge, he at once turned to public life; eschewed Jacobitism; enlisted, like Carteret, under Sunderland and Stanhope, rather than Townshend and Walpole; became Privy Councillor, Lord Chamberlain, and K.G.; and at thirty-one was Secretary of State. In the vicissitudes of partisanship, he even sided with Carteret against Walpole in urging severe reprisals on the city of Edinburgh for the murder of Porteous. But no matter with whom he sided or from whom he differed, once in the saddle there he remained. He served with Walpole till his fall: he was still in office when his brother died. Then his loftiest ambitions were attained, and he became Prime Minister of England; and even here his instinct for management carried him safely through. He failed at first, as we know, to secure the services of Fox as leader of the House of Commons, because he was bent on retaining the real management in his own hands. As Lord Waldegrave puts it, he meant Fox to have 'a double portion of danger and abuse but without any share of power.' But before long Fox succumbed to the love of emoluments which office brought, and the Duke got him on his own terms—a shift of principles which has been coupled for censure with the inconsistent complicity of his son Charles with North in later years. In 1756 affairs were a little too much for Newcastle, and he resigned; but only to return next year, reinforced by Pitt; and he was still Prime Minister when George II. died. In 1762 his star declined. Bute's was in the ascendent, and Newcastle strove in vain to shine with undiminished lustre.

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His overtures were refused, and he retired into private life. He declined to take a pension, and it was said that he eventually died with his property reduced by 300,000*l*. Meanwhile he retained a gallant spirit. ‘Cardinal Fleury began to be Prime Minister at my age,’ was his consoling reflection when Bute beat him; but he was to be Prime Minister no more. His power was broken: even the bishops of his own creation forsook him, and here he certainly belied the imputation of dullness: ‘Even fathers in God,’ said he, ‘sometimes forget their maker.’

The habits of forty years were too strong to allow of retreat such as Pitt simulated and Townshend practised. For opposing the Peace proposals of 1762 Bute secured his dismissal, with other peers, from the territorial office of Lord-Lieutenant; but he had not finished yet. In 1765–6 he was actually in office again—as Privy Seal—for the closing months of Grenville’s administration. In 1767 his house was the scene of a party meeting. One of his last acts was to advocate the repeal of the Stamp Act. In 1768 he was seized with a stroke, and on November 17th he died. Of his private life there is little to be said, and nothing that is evil. He was childless, but so far as we know his home was serene: not even his most unsparing critics coupled scandal with his name.

Had he been born on a lowlier plane, he might have been a very good Whip in the House of Commons—an office christened by Burke during the debate on the Middlesex Election * in 1768, and grown in our own day, as the saying is, out of all knowledge. He was saturated in politics: he had no distractions, domestic or otherwise,

* Sir George Trevelyan: *Early Life of C. J. Fox*.

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to damp his ardour. He was ready to make any sacrifice for the party whose success he desired, even to more than half of his fortune. If he failed sometimes to grasp a large problem, even to comprehend simple details ; if he mistook political manœuvring for statesmanship ; at all events he perfectly understood in which direction party interests were lying : and he undoubtedly had a knack of getting politicians to manœuvre as occasion might demand ; and that after all is the business of a Whip. A subtle discrimination is not required : an open mind is a disqualification for the office. Sweet reasonableness is wasted : irresistible powers of persuasion alone are indispensable. The Duke would have been a happy man had he been allowed to sit in the Treasury, as intent on filling his boroughs as Fox was on filling his pockets, and imagining that the destiny of the nation depended on his manipulation of votes as surely as it did depend on Pitt's marshalling of forces. Personal charm perhaps he lacked, but he was never hated ; and those who jeered and scoffed at a Secretary of State outclassed, would have had a good-humoured indulgence for an eager party manager in his element.

Newcastle does not rank with the statesmen who win our highest admiration ; but his place is not with those who deserve our censure.

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THE UNOBTRUSIVE MINISTER

THE Duke of Newcastle's younger brother is, for dramatic purposes, the least attractive figure in the group of men who served King George. He was the safe man. Everybody trusted him: personal enemies he had none; which was a rare distinction for any one who held the first office. He had no selfish ambition: if Newcastle was born great, and Walpole achieved greatness, Pelham had greatness thrust upon him—and thrust on him, it may be said, by Walpole.

Wilmington died in 1743. Pulteney aimed at the succession, and Carteret was at his back. Then it was that Walpole settled matters by giving, for the King's guidance, his casting vote in Pelham's favour. Pelham had indeed been induced to make a formal application to his sovereign, but, according to Coxe, he instinctively 'shrunk from so delicate and invidious a pre-eminence.' Confirmation of this may be found in the letter of advice which Walpole sent him on July 13th, 1743. Amongst other things he says: 'If you had taken the advice of a fool, and been made Chancellor under Lord Wilmington, the whole had dropped into your mouth.'

Walpole considered Pelham a sounder financier than

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anybody else ; and this was sufficient recommendation. Of all his colleagues he found him the most sympathetic and least troublesome. Perhaps there was also a personal motive for his confidence : when Walpole had been in bodily danger after the debate on the Excise Bill in 1733, Pelham was one of those who came to the rescue. He had gallantly covered his chief's retreat with his sword drawn, shouting, ' Now, gentlemen, who will be the first to fall ? '

It may be asked why the Duke, whose ambition cannot be regarded as purely altruistic, made no protest against the preference before him of his younger brother. There were several reasons. Newcastle was aware that he could make no pretence to comparison in Walpole's estimation : he knew that his brother stood high in the King's regard, and that he himself did not. We have seen that, despite his love of power, and the fact that he ultimately became Prime Minister, he was tormented by timidity and consciousness of the need of a leader and guide. And although his restless and self-centred spirit tempted him on various subsequent occasions to dispute his brother's priority of place, he may still be credited with sincere affection, if not invariable loyalty. ' Believe me, dear brother, much as I like to be commended, I had infinitely more satisfaction,' he adds to a report of how the King at Hanover had been praising his Prime Minister. Indeed, the King never called Pelham puppy, rascal, liar, or fool, and was consistently faithful. When he died, in 1754, Hardwicke declared that he had never seen the King ' under such deep concern ' since he had mourned for Caroline with such noisy lamentation.

Even Horace Walpole had little fault to find with

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Pelham. 'When his power was established,' he wrote, 'he assumed a spirit and authority that became him well. Though he first taught or experienced universal servility in Englishmen, yet he lived without abusing his power, and died poor.' And Sir Robert Wilmot described him to the Duke of Devonshire as 'Mr. Pelham, whose steadiness seems to be of that excellent mortar that binds my Lord President, my Lord Steward, my Lord Chancellor, and even his Grace of Newcastle himself.'

It must be remembered that Pelham was called upon to direct an administration for eleven years at a time when no amount of mortar would ensure a binding loyalty and cohesion. Personal jealousies, rival aspirations, honest differences of opinion, and less honest methods of attainment, must sometimes have depressed the spirits of a minister conscientiously striving to deal rightly with national perils and perplexities. The sole comfort and strength of such a man lies in the sure conviction that he can rely on a faithful and united following. The Cabinets of the eighteenth century are best described in the picturesque language of Sir George Trevelyan:* 'Where mutual respect did not exist, there could be little mutual loyalty, and the statesman who one year had been making out pensions to the courtiers who had obliged his colleague, and warrants against the printers who had libelled him, next year would be thundering against him in Parliament and plotting against him in a hundred constituencies.' For this arduous labour and uncertain honour Pelham had at all events been duly trained. He was born in 1696, and began his public career by serving as a captain in the campaign of

* *Early History of C. J. Fox.*

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1715. Then he went abroad ; but two years later he was back again, and entered Parliament as member for Seaford. In 1720 he became Treasurer of the Chamber ; in 1721 a Lord of the Treasury ; and next year he changed his seat for Sussex, which he represented for the rest of his life. In 1724 he became Secretary at War, but his chief duties appear to have been rather those of peace-maker ; for his brother, the new Secretary of State, was already testing the indulgence of Sir Robert, and Pelham's discretion and good faith were of immediate use. On the other hand, he came near to drawing his sword once more when an altercation with Pulteney went so far that desperate consequences were only averted by the solemn injunction laid on them by order of the House to sink their differences in a formal reconciliation.

Lord Stanhope and Mr. Lecky agree in ascribing to Pelham a fretful and irritable temper, but this is the only recorded instance of his showing a quarrelsome disposition, and his letters to his brother, often replying to querulous and unreasonable protests, reveal, on the contrary, a kindly long-suffering nature. He had no high and ardent aspirations. He was a faithful disciple of Sir Robert Walpole, but he was content to reproduce his tamer qualities without any pretence to equal force of character. He liked *laissez-faire* principles. Personally uncorrupt, he connived at Parliamentary corruption because Sir Robert had practised it. Without vehement prejudice against war, he made a peace policy his own because he shrunk from the obligations of war budgets. He did not even desire to fill Sir Robert's place when he fell, and preferred the Paymastership of the Forces, which he had held since 1730,

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to the more honourable post of Chancellor of the Exchequer ; but two years later he found himself pushed into the first place. As a specimen of his modest principles and uninflated language we may take his defence of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 : ‘I think it my duty to declare my opinion that in our present condition, when the people are all so burdened with taxes, mortgaged for the payment of debts, we are in nowise able singly to withstand the whole House of Bourbon. . . . The tides of public or private credit . . . are slow in their flood, but extremely rapid in their ebb. . . . The ebb had begun, and how far it might have receded none can calculate. It might have left us without ability to send an army into a field or a squadron to sea ; and in such a dangerous situation, would it have been prudent for us to insist on high terms of peace?’

Pelham was not morbidly sensitive on the subject of his oratory, and certainly took little pride in his style. During one of the many outcries against the publication of debates in Parliament, he showed a truly philosophical calm. ‘Let them alone,’ was his advice ; ‘they make better speeches for us than we can make for ourselves.’ And, indeed, a good deal of philosophic calm was needed to carry him through his many perplexities and trials. He embarked on his career as Prime Minister in troubled waters. Within the Cabinet there were factions : he had to keep an eye on Carteret. He could not depend on a majority to support his measures. When he proposed a sugar tax, Sir John Barnard moved to substitute a gin duty in its stead, and beat the Government. Coxe covers the Prime Minister’s humiliation in the tenderest manner : ‘Thus the candour of

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Mr. Pelham contributed to raise him in the estimation of the country and in the confidence of Parliament,' he says; but the surrender probably did much more to raise the confidence of the Opposition. Abroad there was waiting for settlement the status of all Europe. There was the abortive attempt at invasion from France on behalf of the Stuarts: London was unsettled: 'No Hanoverian King' was a toast common and undisguised: Lord Barrymore was arrested with divers others as accomplices in Jacobite plots. Well might Walpole write from his retirement, 'Oh, Mr. Pelham! there are so many inconsistencies arise in every view that order can arise out of nothing but confusion.'

Late in 1744 Carteret was forced out of the Government; then Pitt, whose resentment had been against him personally, rather than against the brothers, declared himself willing to come into alliance with them. Chesterfield and Gower and Lyttelton followed his lead. Chesterfield told Marchmont that 'a message was sent to him by Lord Cobham and Lord Gower in form from the Prince by name, but really from the highest authority of all, that they might all come in on the broadest bottom of all.' But he had been misled. The King resolutely declared that it was bad enough to be obliged to part with men he liked: he was not going to consent to take as his servants men he disliked. Chesterfield he grudgingly allowed to go to Ireland. Pitt he repudiated so defiantly that it was useless to urge his claims. Bolingbroke declared that Pitt was the victim of another hostile influence—Lady Yonge, according to him, was determined that her husband should not be disturbed in his administration of the War Office and intrigued against the contemplated change. This gives a

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picturesque touch of the feminine element in politics, but it is probably invention: certainly it is not required to account for the facts. Gower and Lyttelton received appointments.

One of the first matters to engage Pelham's attention after these breaches had been healed was a motion, brought forward by the Opposition, to impose a tax upon places and pensions. This he opposed on the ground that it insulted the dignity of the House of Commons, and his arguments are worth noting. He objected, he said, because it would 'excite a desire to reduce that House to its ancient functions, which were merely assent or dissent to Bills passed elsewhere'—which was a curious constitutional reflection: also because he thought rich ministers were much to be desired; otherwise they would certainly be bribed by enemies; 'to a man of no fortune all countries are alike.' The last passage inflicts a considerable slight upon the patriotic credit of his countrymen: it also sets up the familiar 'stake in the country' as a security to be encouraged.

In 1745 came the political crisis at the hour of invasion: out of it the brothers came with profit, for they were allowed to bring over Chesterfield and make him Secretary of State, whilst Pitt was admitted to office as joint Vice-Treasurer of Ireland. In spite of all the calls that were being made on the Exchequer, it cannot be said that Pelham had cause to be sad. In 1746 the Budget was balanced by a tax on glass and a small increase of duty on spirits. Next year houses, windows, and carriages were put under additional levy; but when all was said and done, the charges for the year, without the civil list, were

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under ten millions. Next year there was a small rise, but this was met by the addition of a shilling in the pound on the duties of tonnage and poundage. Even landlords were not sent empty away, unless, indeed, we misinterpret a grant of 152,037*l.* 'as compensation for proprietors of heritable jurisdiction.' The compensation for 'loss of horned cattle' was paid faithfully year by year. And Parliament even found leisure to discuss a measure 'to restrain the vice of profane swearing.'

It is a matter for some surprise that Pelham should have retained the King's favour throughout these years, for George II. was a man of war, and Pelham never wavered in his desire for peace at any price. Newcastle on the other hand was, we are told, 'all military': yet he never supplanted his brother in the King's good graces. One clause in the treaty of peace concluded at Aix-la-Chapelle did, indeed, tax Pelham's natural complacency. By Article IX. it was provided that 'the King of England engages to send two hostages of rank to Paris, until Cape Breton, and all his conquests in the West and East Indies shall be restored.' This, Pelham found difficult to digest; but he put a good face upon it, and sure enough two noblemen of rank, the Earls of Cathcart and Sussex, sallied forth to Paris, where they were received and treated in the handsomest manner.*

In 1750 Pelham contrived to carry through Parliament a scheme for the conversion of the Debt, which need not be followed in detail. His brother was in his most restless and provocative mood, and had Pitt on his side in the Cabinet quarrel. Pelham had to make the most of the

* Coxe, *Pelham*, ii. 43; Lord Stanhope, &c.

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countenance afforded him by Henry Fox. Peace having been, for the moment, secured, Parliament had leisure to make much of domestic affairs, and an amusing episode arose out of the Westminster Election. Lord Trentham had been elected in December 1749. A scrutiny was demanded, and this was allowed to run on into May of the following year. The High Bailiff was then summoned to appear at the Bar of the House to account for his negligent and incompetent behaviour. He protested that due dispatch of business had been rendered impossible by the outrageous conduct of the friends of the defeated candidate, Mr. Cooke, and he specially named the Hon. Alexander Murray and Mr. Crowle. These gentlemen were accordingly required to attend and receive the censure of the House, upon their knees. Mr. Crowle obeyed at once, only observing that it was the dirtiest house he had ever been in. Murray was of a different metal. 'Sir,' said he, 'when I have committed a crime, I kneel to God for pardon; but I know my own innocence and cannot kneel to anybody else.' Then followed one of those personal episodes which are the delight of Parliament, and which can imperil Governments and create new parties, as happened in the case of Mr. Bradlaugh. The original question of the conduct of the Election was forgotten: it was Murray's conduct that mattered now. After an animated debate he was sentenced by vote of the House to be confined a 'close prisoner' in Newgate. An amendment was moved to modify the condition of close confinement, but it was defeated; and at five in the morning he was carried off 'strictly guarded.' It was even proposed that his humour for martyrdom should be indulged by his being

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transferred to the Tower and placed in the cell named 'Little Ease,' sacred to the memory of Sir Walter Raleigh. But Parliament, albeit composed of men, is as capricious as the women about whom poets dogmatise—ready to fly at conclusions, and quick to run away again. Murray complained of boredom and cramp in the stomach: to relieve the former he was at once granted the use of pens, ink, and paper; to minister to the latter, his sister, an apothecary, a physician, and a nurse were sent to him. Encouraged by these signs of penitence, his brother, Lord Elibank, moved Parliament for his release; but the hero fit was on again. Murray ungratefully declared that 'he would not come out of Newgate, and that it was mean and paltry in that puppy, his brother, or any of his friends to petition for his enlargement.' He then persuaded his physician to certify that his health was suddenly and wonderfully improved. In Newgate therefore he remained until the end of the Session, when his imprisonment came automatically to an end. In contrast with his ignominious arrival, his departure was attended by a complimentary escort of Sheriffs.

But the pen, ink, and paper had caused trouble. No sooner was Murray out than a pamphlet appeared setting forth his grievance and complaint in such disrespectful terms that Parliament could not afford to be indifferent. Pelham, with all his love of peace and quiet, felt it incumbent upon him to support a motion in favour of renewed punishment; and Murray would no doubt have returned to Newgate if he had not chosen to flit across to the Continent instead. A reward for his capture was advertised: the pamphlet was condemned as an impudent,

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scandalous, and malicious libel, and a prosecution of the publisher was ordered. But the conclusion was very tame : the jury acquitted the publisher ; nobody arrested Murray ; and Parliament wisely decided to forget their insulted dignity and proceed to other business.

The Jacobites were still hovering in the background, and their shadow was invoked in the debates which followed on the motion to reduce the army. It is curious to observe that Lord Egmont recommended an army 'just sufficient to guard against any sudden unexpected invasion.' Mr. Thornton was one of those who maintained that there was no need to maintain any standing army ; but 'his reasoning did not obtain the attention which it deserved.' Dr. Lee urged that the Jacobite menace precluded the possibility of any reduction at all. But Parliament appears to have been less interested in the Jacobites and the army than in Murray's contumacy, for we are told that the only difficulty with which the Government had now to contend was the securing of a daily quorum of members. Pelham himself seems to have taken matters coolly enough : he did not believe in a Jacobite rising. He did not forget that some of the Scots Greys had gone over to the invader in '45, but he felt quite comfortable when he had quoted Louis XIV. as saying 'that he could not but laugh at his brother James for attempting to establish Popery in England with a protestant army.'

A passing squall was raised in 1753 by the passing of the measure for the naturalisation of Jews. This Pelham supported ; but it was not popular and was speedily repealed. When a number of Ipswich boys were going to be confirmed by the Bishop of Norwich, clamorous inquiries

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were raised as to whether they would be forced to undergo the peculiar rite identified with admission into the Jewish fold.

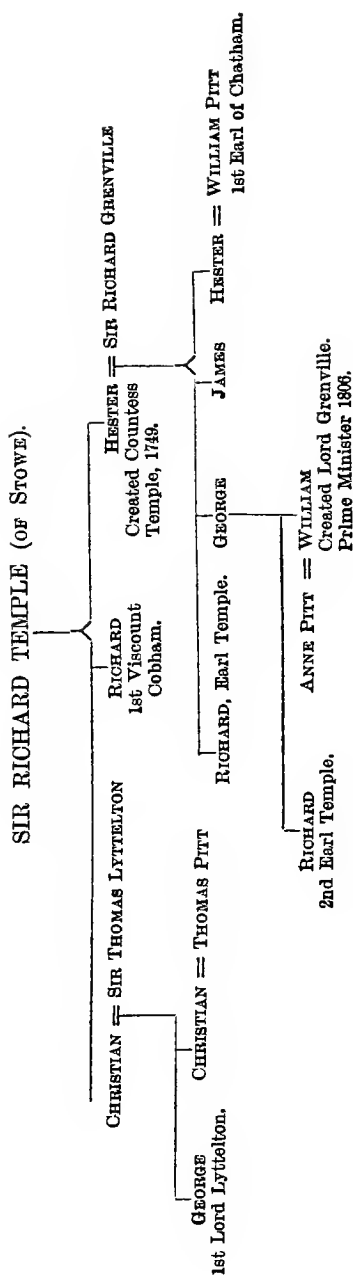
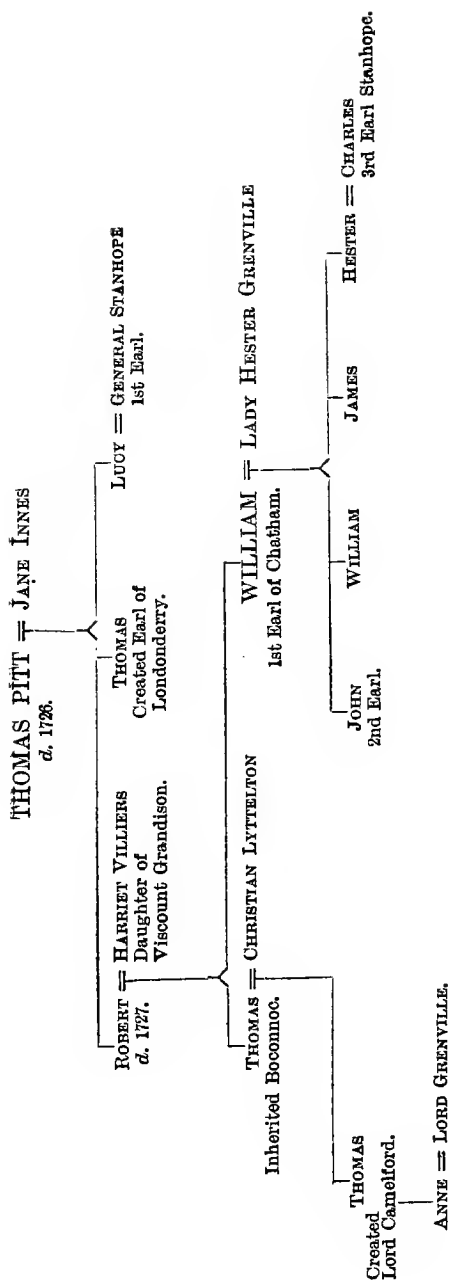
Pelham's attention to domestic matters extended to an act which enforced a minimum width of nine inches for the felloes of all waggon wheels for the preservation of highways. In divers small matters his term of office may be credited with the passing of measures, not conspicuous in history, but sensible and profitable for his generation. If economy before all things was dear to his heart he was not entirely happy in his opportunities. War expenditure had helped to raise the national debt from fifty-one millions in 1743 to seventy-three millions in 1754. His last budget, on the other hand, apart from the civil list, had to provide for an expenditure of something under three millions; and his biographer claims for him that by his successful conversion scheme he effected a material reduction on the amount that had to be added to the interest payable on the debt. We end as we began by calling Pelham the safe man. Lord Stanhope perhaps classes him too low when he says, 'We may place him in that large and respectable class of statesmen whom contemporaries are right to keep in office, but whom history will seldom take the trouble to remember.' At all events contemporaries were so far satisfied with their choice that they bestowed on him the flattering title of Henry IX.

Hoare's portrait represents Pelham as a handsome man with an honest and pleasant countenance. As a true disciple of Walpole he appears to have led a life sufficiently convivial to give him those ample proportions which were the badge of all the tribe of eighteenth century

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statesmen. His only confession of predilection occurs in a correspondence with Chesterfield, to whom he confides that he is trying to cure a cold with sack whey. Chesterfield, not to be outdone in matters of taste, replies that he is getting rid of his cough by a strange combination of asses' milk and riding. Pelham has, indeed, been described somewhere as a professed gamester; but if posterity has taken the trouble to remember him, in spite of Lord Stanhope's doubts, it is on his merits as an honest public servant and not by reason of any liveliness that scandal can impart.

CHATHAM :
THE WAR MINISTER



CHATHAM: THE WAR MINISTER

IT is necessary to bear in mind these family connections, in order to understand the 'Cousinhood' which exercised a large influence on Chatham's career. A light sketch requires no elaborate background, and a few words will dispose of his own relatives. The Pitts can be traced through a respectable, if not illustrious line, to the fourteenth or fifteenth century. They were Dorsetshire people, and one or two were fortunate enough to secure small appointments under Government. The only member of the family that deserves attention is Thomas Pitt, Chatham's grandfather (1653-1726). His was an adventurous nature. He began life as a sailor: then he turned his thoughts to trading in the East. Regardless of Company monopolies, he set to work on his own account. He was immediately assailed as an 'interloper,' and the determination of his character is revealed in the fact that he did not get the worst of the struggle. For twelve years he was Governor of Madras. His enterprise led him to buy a diamond, which gave him a fortune and immortality. The transaction made him liable to insinuations of fraud, but these were never substantiated. The stone cost him something between 20,000*l.* and 25,000*l.*: it was

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afterwards sold to the Regent of France for 135,000*l.*, and has since then been valued at 480,000*l.*

Pitt became a member of that class which spread consternation through the ranks of the patricians and landlords of England. Their dignity, their station, and their wealth were threatened with eclipse by the Indian nabobs, and they were as much shocked as their descendants have been by the arrival of the South African millionaires. Pitt played the part thoroughly. He bargained for the famous pocket borough of Old Sarum and became a Member of Parliament; and he bought several places in the country. He preferred to live at Swallowfield, near Reading, but his finest possession was Boconnoc, in Cornwall, which passed by marriage into the Grenville family. Lord Grenville's daughter carried this heritage, together with her father's property, Dropmore, into the Fortescue family. The present owner therefore possesses, in completeness the Temple-Pitt traditions. Jane Innes was descended from Moray, natural son of James V. of Scotland; but Robert, the son, was given to understand by his mother-in-law that this counted for nothing in comparison with the blood of Villiers. Her husband was dead, but Lady Grandison never let him forget that her daughter had married, as it is called, beneath her. Thomas married Lady Frances Ridgeway, daughter and coheirress of the Earl of Londonderry. He obtained a new creation of barony, and in 1726 he was advanced to an earldom. He died in 1729. Two sons succeeded him: the younger, third Earl, died in 1764, and the title again became extinct.

It must be said with sorrow that the Pitts were not

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harmoniously united. Governor Pitt got on badly with his wife and with his son Robert. Robert brought an action against his brother Londonderry, whom he accused of obtaining money under false pretences from their father; and he was never on satisfactory terms with his son Thomas. In fact we may look at Chatham's life without much heed to his birth and early surroundings. He may have inherited his masterful and aspiring spirit from his grandfather: everything else was peculiar to himself, and in his own life, and in the son which he begot, we find the interest of our study.

William Pitt was born in 1708. He was sent to Eton and Oxford. At the University he wrote a Latin ode on the death of George I.; in this Lord Macaulay detected a false quantity and condemned it as worthless. Mr. Frederic Harrison, less austere, passes it as not below the average, and credits the author with a genuine appreciation of his classics. At the age of twenty-three he gained the good opinion of Lord Cobham, by whose favour he obtained a commission in the Army. It is one of the minor fallacies of history that Pitt served in the Blues. This is a mistake: Lord Cobham commended the First King's Own Regiment of Dragoons—if it be possible to say exactly what any regiment was called at any particular date. Titles were changed then more lightly than they are now. He lived on terms of great intimacy with his commanding officer, and shared his thoughts upon matters outside the profession. Cobham was a freethinker, and in 1733 the young cornet produced a solemn treatise on superstition. But controversial theology was not to be his occupation, and arms were to be his profession only by

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deputy. In politics he found he found his inevitable vocation.

Pitt was elected, or nominated, for the borough of Old Sarum in 1735.* Old Thomas Pitt had called himself a Whig. Robert had been a Tory and something of a Jacobite; but he was dead, and William was hampered by no sense of duty or sacred association. He and Thomas were both attracted to the young and gifted band of brothers, with whom they became allied by marriage. If Pitt was prompted by any personal motive it might be found in the fact that Cobham, his patron and friend, Cobham, whose house at Stowe this band of brothers made their gathering-place, had been deprived of his regiment by Walpole, for opposing the Excise Bill of 1733.

Pitt fell naturally into the ranks of Walpole's enemies, and consequently into the following of Frederick, Prince of Wales. This does not mean that he became a Tory. His colleagues represented the discontented Whigs. His portrait hangs to-day in the Carlton Club, and members are content to take it for granted that he was a pillar of the party which they represent; but so far as Pitt can be said to have borne any label, and not been a law unto himself, he must be classed with the Whigs with whom, from first to last, he was connected. His association with Bute in 1760-1 was involuntary, and he never leaned towards a Tory alliance. In fact his theory of government was to break up party combinations, and, as we shall see, he deliberately attempted this policy in 1766. He laid

* His brother Thomas was elected for Old Sarum and Okehampton: he preferred the latter, and handed over the vacant seat to William.

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it down that 'this country ought not to be governed by any party or faction, and that if it was to be so governed, the Constitution must necessarily expire.'*

What he thought of himself may be inferred from the character adopted by his son. Mr. Lecky writes of the younger Pitt, 'To the end of his life he was accustomed among his friends to call himself a Whig, and up to the period of which I am now writing (1788) he had done nothing to forfeit his title to the name.'

By consent of his contemporaries and our own, Pitt was an orator of first order. He was extremely and intentionally elaborate. In one sense his speeches were unstudied: 'I must sit still,' he once told Lord Shelburne, for when once I am up, everything that is in my mind comes out';† but there was in his manner so much aiming at effect that he has been compared with David Garrick. If his taste and eloquence were not invariably pure, he certainly held the secret of impressing his audience with admiration and even with awe. To some extent this was due to his personality alone: one word of comment, even a single flash from his eye, was enough to disconcert and silence an opponent. It is recorded that he once began a speech with the words, 'Sugar, Mr. Speaker': upon which members grinned. Thrice in terrible tones he repeated the unpromising word. The House sat silent and

* *Life of Shelburne*, iii. 238. Compare the opinion of Lord Shelburne: 'he wished never to see more than two parties: that of the Crown and that of the people; and he thought any third party distinct from both ruinous to the kingdom.' *Ib.* iii. 122.

† It is curious to observe that Mr. Lecky writes of the younger Pitt that he 'had, to a very remarkable degree the inestimable gift of reticence, a gift which is rarely united with so great a wealth of words.'

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dismayed as he sternly demanded, 'Who will laugh at sugar now?' Grattan, who heard him in his old age, said he was 'Very odd and very great. His style was not regular oratory like Cicero or Demosthenes, but it was very fine and very elevated. His gesture was always graceful: he was an incomparable actor. Had it not been so, it would have appeared ridiculous.' His speeches were again unstudied in so far as they were not the product of incessant practice. Charles Fox once said he had spoken every night for four sessions with a single exception, and he regretted he had not spoken then. Pitt did not speak for sheer delight of speaking: he did not rush upon the House of Commons. He had been a member for a year before he made his first attempt. In April 1736 Pulteney moved for an address of congratulation to the King upon the marriage of the Prince of Wales. The essence of it lay in the fact that the bridegroom and his father were sworn enemies. Sober politicians would have found their tact severely tested in avoiding language hypocritical on the one hand and discordant on the other. Pitt, with mischievous intention, contrived to embody both in his maiden speech. Macaulay dismisses this as 'empty and wordy' rubbish—wordy, no doubt it was, but if any new member could make a speech so clever and audacious now, he would certainly not be condemned as empty. We shall learn that when Pitt came to be admitted into the King's councils he adopted, in evident sincerity, a tone of adulation almost oriental. On this occasion he employed a high-flown and extravagant eulogy to adorn the bitterness of his sarcasm. He spoke of the angry father's 'tender and paternal

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delight in indulging his submissive and obedient son,' of whose insubordinate and revengeful conduct Pitt was an avowed abettor. According to Hervey he was responsible for keeping at fever heat the animosity that had grown up between Frederick and Queen Caroline. In fact, he was a thorough Prince's man, and uncompromisingly hostile to Court and Government.

Walpole, at all events, did not think him empty. He perceived at once that it was expedient to 'muzzle this terrible cornet.' Pitt was dismissed from the army. How this persecution was to silence a young man of genius and courage it is not easy to perceive. Pitt was, rather, 'unmuzzled,' like Mr. Gladstone in 1865, and he proceeded on his way undaunted.

It cannot be said that during the period which followed Pitt gave evidence of consistent thinking and serious principle. He became a free-lance, an opportunist, something of an adventurer, who meant to make his way. Next year came the public quarrel between the Prince and the King, about money. Pitt was one of those who urged rebellion, against the more temperate counsel of Carteret. The Prince rewarded his ardour by making him Groom of the Bedchamber.

It might be worth while to ascertain, if that were possible, whether Pitt was subject already to any of the morbid influences which so deeply affected his subsequent conduct. Dealing with the later period, Lord Fitzmaurice is able to quote the opinion of Sir Andrew Clark, that 'suppressed gout disordered the whole nervous system and drove him into a state of mental depression, varying with excitement and equivalent to insanity.' He suffered

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from gout as a young man ; there was a good deal that was wayward and unwise in his conduct at the outset, and it may be that the symptoms which afterwards became acute were already astir. Carteret once said : ‘Pitt used to call me madman, but I never was half so mad as he.’ It would be exaggeration to pretend that Pitt was insane in 1737, but it is not inconceivable that he lacked even then a capacity for accommodation and self-restraint.

The years that followed were principally occupied with an unceasing attack upon Walpole. In 1739 he denounced his Spanish negotiations as ‘a stipulation for national ignominy’ : ‘This convention, I think from my soul, is nothing but a stipulation for national ignominy ; an illusory expedient to baffle the resentment of the nation ; a truce without a suspension of hostilities on the part of Spain ; on the part of England a suspension, as to Georgia, of the first law of nature, self-preservation and self-defence ; a surrender of the rights and the trade of England to the mercy of the plenipotentiaries, and in this infinitely highest and sacred point, future security, not only inadequate, but directly repugnant to the resolutions of Parliament and the gracious promise from the Throne. The complaints of your despairing merchants, the voice of England, have condemned it ; be the guilt of it upon the head of its adviser ! God forbid that this Committee should share the guilt of approving it !’ We have already been told that in 1741 he offered his protection to Sir Robert in his hour of need, but even if this be true, despite its inherent improbability, it remains that he went on now to work heart and soul with Lyttelton for the Minister’s

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undoing. He clamoured for war as loud as any man when Walpole was averse from war: 'Is this any longer a nation? Or where is an English Parliament, if with more ships in our harbours than in all the navies of Europe, with more than two millions of people in the American colonies, we will bear to hear of the expediency of receiving from Spain an insecure, unsatisfactory, dishonourable convention, which carries downright subjection in every line.' Yet he afterwards admitted freely that he was wrong. Nor was this the only case in which he had presently to unsay what he had said.

No man denounced more fiercely than he the principle of subsidising Hanoverian troops. He spoke disparagingly of the men; he deplored our connection with the Electorate and the devotion bestowed upon it by the King, exciting thus his sovereign's most savage animosity. Yet as soon as he had forced himself into office, he cheerfully dropped this language and supported the Hanoverian principles. He recanted his condemnation of Walpole's Spanish policy so far as to waive the crucial question of the right of search. Before he was in Parliament he had joined eagerly in the clamour against the Excise Bill which his patron, Cobham, had opposed to his cost. Office so far moderated his violence that he even repudiated these sentiments: he had changed his mind: very well: 'Let those who are ashamed to confess their errors, laugh out,' was his defiant apology. In fact, during his first ten years in Parliament, Pitt opposed for the sake of opposing, and he uttered many big words which he had to swallow afterwards as best he could. He made for himself in the process great fame as an

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orator, though it is understood that the speeches which remain for our admiration owe much to the embellishment of Dr. Johnson, who prepared them for the Press. The line which he chose to follow led him to protest against increase in the army votes, and it is curious to find the man whose great glory was established on the achievements of British arms thundering against the spirited foreign policy of Carteret, deprecating foreign entanglements, and inveighing against a standing army as a danger to liberty.

Here, however, Pitt could plead something better than a habit of contradiction. He could argue that he only objected to large armies because all our thoughts should be centred on the fleet, and he certainly laid down principles which should endear him to our Carlton Club. He clearly and repeatedly upheld a two-power standard : we must always be prepared to engage the combined navies of France and Spain. And he took the practical view that we must rely upon undoubted naval superiority to divert the rich stream of American trade from Spanish ports to our own. In this, at all events, he had nothing to repent, except that he was allying himself with Carteret, who was presently to be the special object of his malice. Pitt's unsparing hostility to Government was rewarded, as in the case of Chesterfield. In 1744 the old Duchess of Marlborough died, and in her will she left him 10,000*l.* in consideration of the 'noble defence he had made for the support of the laws of England and to prevent the ruin of his country.'* He has been praised

* There was a large reversionary interest in the event of her grandson dying without an heir, but in this he was disappointed.

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at the expense of his rival, Fox, for his freedom from avarice. Both became Paymaster of the Forces : Fox used his golden opportunity to the utmost, Pitt refrained ; but his self-denial was due to no admirable system of economy. His extravagance, as we shall see, became prodigious. He inherited two fortunes and would no doubt have welcomed more. He could be austere in office, but he was one of those men who must have money and care little whose it is. He had no objection to placing himself presently under heavy obligations to his brother-in-law Temple. For the moment he had to make the most of the reward of virtue bestowed on him by the Duchess, notwithstanding that it had aggravated the displeasure of the King. Pitt had not only spoken ill of Hanover, he had blamed King George for loving it, and he might as well have spoken slightly to a lover of his mistress. Yet he believed his hour had come. In November 1744 Granville was driven from office and the Pelhams formed their Government 'on the broad bottom.' Lyttelton, Pitt's ally and fellow-servant in the Prince's household, was admitted to the Treasury. The Ministers were sincerely anxious to engage Pitt. They feared him ; they feared Granville ; and Pitt hated Granville as much as they did. But Hanover stood, as it were, between Pitt and his sovereign. He was not the sole offender. Many more were ill-contented. Murray had been a fearless critic : he had charged the Ministers with betrayal of their own country in favouring this dangerous appendage to the State ; he did not doubt that they loved their country very well, but they loved their places better.

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The spreading of these sacrilegious opinions only increased the King's uneasiness and anger. He would not hear of Pitt, one of the most outspoken. Nevertheless, Pitt meant to come in. He took the important step of resigning his post under Frederick, and so severing his connection with one of the King's notorious enemies. Thomas, his brother, untroubled with ambition, remained in the Prince's service. Then came the '45, and the King's troubles increased apace. At first he declined to believe in the gravity of the situation, and told the Duke of Devonshire that it would soon blow over. But unfriendly politicians began to move. Lord Thanet, he whose health used to be a toast at the Rumpsteak and Liberty Club, thought the movement suitable for requiring from the throne a fresh declaration of purpose to 'defend and secure our free constitution,' obviously offensive to a proud man who was already hard pressed. And the pressure grew severe.

It is worth noting, as we pass, that an offer was made to the Government by some Scotch peers to raise regiments in the Highlands. The Cabinet thought the risk too great, and refused. A dozen years later Pitt, in the thick of his campaign of triumph, had resource to this expedient, and found in it a succour he could trust. It is just to the Pelhams to say that the value of the Highlanders at the moment was liable to doubt. It was not unreasonable to suspect their power of resisting the appeal of a Stuart landing on Scottish soil, claiming the throne of his fathers. Nor was it certain that they were troops ready made for the service. The Duke of Queensberry for one hung back, on the ground that 'it would make us ridiculous, and we

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should be put into a ballad, for our regiments are of no use.' Argyle testified rather to the fighting instincts than the habits of discipline to be looked for. The Camerons, he said, had been in arms several years, and he had paid $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of his rents to be safe from plunder. At all events, the offer was refused, and, so far from blowing over, the storm burst furiously. In the middle of it the Pelhams resigned. The attempt of Granville and Bath to form a Government ended in fiasco. Then the brothers were recalled; they could name their own conditions, and amongst these was the admission to office of William Pitt.

The King yielded with a bad grace. This much, at least, he stipulated: that the man he abhorred should hold no place which required attendance at St. James's; and Pitt became Joint Vice-Treasurer of Ireland (March 1746). He held this post in conjunction with Lord Cholmondeley, and it was practically a sinecure. That it was capable of being turned to profit gave it no charm in his eyes. Within a few weeks the death of Winnington made necessary a new disposal of departments. The King was still resolutely set against Pitt's appointment as Secretary at War, but some yielding is apparent in the consent which he gave to his removal to the office of Paymaster of the Forces in England. It may well be that prejudice was being conquered. We have seen that Pitt was prepared, not only to modify his opinions, but—as the phrase was in a modern controversy—to go the whole hog. He had been inspired more by hatred of Carteret than anything else. No sooner had Carteret fallen (November 1744) than he was ready to recant. He had shown his purpose by resigning his post at Leicester House, and he avowed sentiments which were plainly intended

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to commend him to the King. So he became English Paymaster, and here he adopted a practice which has always been laid to his credit, and marks the contrast between him and Fox, of which we have heard. It was the recognised custom for the Paymaster to place the large public balances to his own credit, and to keep the interest to be made by investing them. It was usual for him to receive a commission on all subsidies paid to foreign sovereigns. Fox revelled in these opportunities. His desire to amass money was insatiable. He was no miser; what he had freely received he freely gave, and his adored son Charles was welcome to plunge both hands into the profits of long extortion when his time came. Fox had made a runaway marriage with the Duke of Richmond's daughter, and he probably craved for riches and a peerage in order to confound those who had spoken of him in disparagement. At all events, he was content to return to this inferior post in 1757, after having filled the first offices in the Government. With Pitt the case was different. He was improvident; he could therefore afford to have scruples. He would not touch a shilling beyond his salary. He declined the usual commission on the Sardinian subsidy, and when the astonished King of Sardinia offered a handsome gift in compensation, he refused it without ceremony. At all events, he was able to exclaim, in 1762, 'This hand is clean: nothing is sticking to these fingers.'

If Pitt's political vagaries at this time of transition do not indicate a firm and inflexible temperament, at all events he gave sufficient evidence of a strong mind. He quarrelled with his original patron, Cobham, because he was inclined to be too tender with Carteret. Cobham was one

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of the Lords Justices during the King's absence in Hanover in 1745. He made honourable proposals for Pitt in the arrangements which he put forward during the crisis, but Pitt was offended, and behaved ungraciously. Cobham in his disappointment declared that his old favourite was 'a wrong-headed fellow, and that he had no regard for him.' Chesterfield was shrewd enough to observe that Pitt was 'extravagantly proud, and meant to distinguish himself' as leader of his family party. Meanwhile he was making good his ground in the House of Commons. He was already subject to fearful attacks of gout, and in 1745 was obliged to hobble to his place on crutches and address his audience sitting. Early in 1746 the Duke of Newcastle wrote to the Duke of Cumberland, 'Mr. Pitt spoke so well that the Premier told me he had the dignity of Sir William Wyndham, the wit of Mr. Pulteney, and the knowledge and judgment of Sir Robert Walpole.' 'He could tickle to death with a feather,' was the more delicate criticism of Horace Walpole, who confessed elsewhere that he had never been one of Pitt's admirers.

The eight years that followed were the least eventful in Pitt's life. He was so loyal a member of Government that we find him supporting Pelham's pacific speeches in 1749 with the humble proposition that no nation should provoke a war when it was conscious of being the weaker party. Two years later, when the brothers were quarrelling, Pitt had to choose his side, and he preferred Newcastle. This put him in a favourable position for opposing Pelham's motion to reduce the Navy, and enabled him to repeat his favourite axiom that the fleet was the standing army of England.

In 1754 Pelham died, and King George exclaimed,

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‘Now I shall have no more peace.’ It was a true prophecy; true also for others, including Pitt. Newcastle succeeded his brother, and having failed to get Fox to lead the House of Commons without any control of the secret service, he appointed Sir Thomas Robinson. ‘The Duke might as well send his jack-boot to lead us,’ said Pitt, in his scorn, and the two junior ministers proceeded to persecute the wretched man, instead of supporting him. Fox, who was Secretary at War, was content with this form of protest; but the Paymaster went further, and began to aim his diatribes at his chief. The House, he said, was reduced to registering the edicts of one too-powerful subject. Newcastle had neither the courage to dismiss Pitt nor the adroitness to attach him. From Fox he hoped for better things. Renewed overtures seduced him. Fox became a Cabinet Minister, and ceased to be Pitt’s friend.

It is instructive to notice the terms upon which these two men passed their political lives. We are accustomed to compare their rivalry with that which afterwards influenced the careers of their sons: but the analogy is false. The fathers were never recognised leaders of opposing sides: they did most of their quarrelling as colleagues. Pitt was not given to the formation of friendships outside the cousinhood, but he and Fox were at first on good enough terms. ‘Could you serve under Fox?’ asked Chesterfield of Pitt. ‘My Lord, leave out under; it will never be a word between us. Mr. Fox and I shall never quarrel.’ Yet if contemporary gossip be true, Fox early began to ‘privately forswear all connection with Pitt,’ and the Duke of Newcastle, with incredible tactlessness, repeated enough to sow discord between his colleagues. In 1754, when Pitt got no

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promotion, his disappointment and indignation turned suspicion into hatred. Fox, conscious perhaps that he had not been candid and loyal, took refuge in abuse of the man he had injured. Nevertheless, when the King invited him to form a Government in 1756, he was obliged to approach Pitt, and was instantly repulsed. What Pitt felt about Fox may be gathered from this entry in the diary of Bubb Dodington in 1755. 'Mr. Pitt came to Lord Hillsborough, where was Mr. Fox, who stepping aside, and Mr. Pitt thinking he was gone the latter declared to Lord Hillsborough that all connexion between him and Mr. Fox was over that he would be second to nobody. Mr. Fox rejoining the company, Mr. Pitt, being heated, said the same and more to him. . . . (He said) he esteemed Mr. Fox but that all connexion with him was at an end. . . . Mr. Fox had taken the smooth part and had left him to be fallen upon : Fox had risen upon his shoulders, but he did not blame him ; and he only showed me how impossible it was for two to act together who did not stand upon the same ground !' Horace Walpole records this fragment of dialogue : Fox, ' What ! you mean you will not act with me as Minister ? ' Pitt : ' I do. ' Fox had now been promoted to be Secretary of State, and Pitt was out of office.* In spite of this we shall find them serving together in the Government of 1757, Pitt having risen to the Secretary's office, Fox having descended again to the inglorious opulence of Paymaster. Their mutual relations thereafter were at best a state of armed neutrality ; yet Fox so well appreciated the character of Pitt that in 1769 he admitted that he longed for his return ; he was ' the only man he had ever

* He was dismissed November 1755.

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seen in power who had no tinge of the general and fatal fault of irresolution.' The conditions of their conflict were in fact those of Walpole and Carteret, not those of Disraeli and Gladstone; whereas the struggle between the younger Pitt and Charles Fox had some of the characteristics of both. Between Disraeli and Gladstone there could never have been personal sympathy, yet until the Peelites ended their corporate existence in 1858, political communion between the two was not out of the question. Disraeli was willing to serve under Gladstone in 1852; he urged his enlistment in the Government of 1858. With Lord Palmerston passed away the system of accommodation Governments: thenceforward party lines were definitely laid, and choice had to be made between the way of Gladstone and the way of Disraeli, both of whom were about to become leaders. The younger Fox and Pitt began life closer friends than their fathers: nobody gave Chatham's son more generous welcome or professed more ungrudging admiration of his abilities than the son of Holland. Party connections then were quite fluid, and depended more on personal than on political motives. Pitt and Fox drifted apart, and their antagonism became acute and genuine. It was Pitt's fate to spend most of his life in office. Fox, with the exception of a few months, was always in opposition. Their antagonism was an anticipation of the practice that has become established in our day in a much nearer degree than it was a continuation of the habit observed in the days of their fathers.*

* In the desperate emergency of 1804, Pitt was eager to form an alliance with Fox; the strength of all parties in union was needed to withstand the pressure of national peril. Whether Fox could have adapted his irresponsible spirit to so grave an obligation may be doubted; but the proposal was suppressed by the stubborn refusal of George III.

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The elder Pitt, then, was estranged from Henry Fox and deeply resented Newcastle's preference. His insubordination was undisguised, but he was permitted to serve on until November 1755. Then upon the Address he made a speech which was too much even for Newcastle. Pitt was dismissed. This speech is conspicuous amongst his memorials, and it may be noted here as a specimen of his dramatic manner: 'I am at a distance from that sanctum sanctorum whither the priest goes for inspiration. I, who travel through a desert and am overwhelmed with mountains of obscurity, cannot so easily catch a gleam to direct me to the beauties of these negotiations. But there are parts of the address that do not seem to me to come from the same quarter with the rest. I cannot unravel this mystery; yes, (he cried, suddenly raising his hand to his forehead;) I too am inspired! Now it strikes me! I remember at Lyons to have been carried to see the conflux of the Rhone and Saone: the one a gentle, feeble, languid stream, and though languid, of no depth; the other, a boisterous and impetuous torrent. But they meet at last, and long may they continue united, to the comfort of each other, and to the glory, honour, and security of the nation.'

Upon this Dr. Von Ruville makes the following comment: 'After the debate, Fox went, full of curiosity, to Pitt, and asked him "Who is the Rhone?" Pitt replied, "Is that a fair question?" "Why," said Fox, "as you have said so much that I did not desire to hear, you may tell me one thing that I would hear. Am I the Rhone or Lord Granville?" Pitt answered, 'You are Granville.' Lord Temple, no bad commentator on Pitt's meaning, said

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that the Rhone meant the Duke of Cumberland, Fox, or Lord Granville, that is the war party; the Saone, the Duke of Newcastle, the Chancellor, and Murray, *i.e.* the old Pelham group. As the Rhone is the violent, and the Saone the peaceful river, the simile is more or less suitable, though it would be better to limit the parallel to Fox and Newcastle, as was generally done on that occasion.' Of the effect produced upon his audience, we can learn something from the report of Horace Walpole, who 'was never one of Pitt's admirers,' to his friend Conway. 'He rose at one o'clock and spoke for an hour and thirty-five minutes: there was more humour, wit, vivacity, finer language, more boldness, in short, more astonishing perfections than even you, who are used to him, can conceive. He was not abusive, yet very attacking on all sides; he ridiculed my Lord Hillsborough, crushed poor Sir George, terrified the Attorney, lashed my Lord Granville, painted my Lord of Newcastle, attacked Mr. Fox, and even hinted up to the Duke of Cumberland.'

It was soon evident that Fox, secured to the Government, was a weak barrier against Pitt driven into opposition: 'to leave Fox in the Government and take away Pitt was like the Lord Chancellor in the gunpowder plot, who found twenty-five barrels of power; took away ten, and hoped that the other fifteen would do no harm.' Such was the opinion of old Lord Bath.

Pitt's conduct now was erratic. He resumed at once his hostile attitude towards German entanglements, and advocated a policy of leaving Hanover to its fate, to be redeemed in case of disaster on such terms as might be found possible. He who had resolutely opposed any in-

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crease in the standing army now attacked Ministers for not augmenting it. He brought in a Militia Bill, which was indeed consistent with his old principles to the extent of being based on voluntary and temporary service only. He described it as an extension of the standing army. The most noteworthy conditions of this scheme were that the officers were to receive no pay, and that the men were to be exercised two days in each week, of which one was to be Sunday. Lyttelton, who was now estranged from Pitt, and had remained in the Government, opposed the measure, arguing that mercenaries were a safer resource than ill-trained amateurs. A brisk duel followed; but the Bill was popular, and it was found expedient to let it pass through the Commons. Newcastle hated it, and wrote to the Duke of Devonshire that he feared it would 'breed up our people to a love of arms and divert them from their true business, husbandry, manufactures, &c.,' a fear which subsequent history has certainly not justified. The Lords threw it out, but a measure upon similar lines was passed by both Houses in 1757, during the interval between Pitt's second dismissal and his return to office.

Pitt was indeed in the temper of a naughty child. He was not sure what he wanted. He even showed signs of taking back his allegiance to Leicester House. He was certainly alarmed at the prospects of a French invasion, and terrified the House with visions of the sacking of London. He had the support here of a book, already quoted, which for the moment created an agonising sensation. *Brown's Estimate* informed the nation that they were a race of cowards and scoundrels, and that nothing could save them: they were on the point of being enslaved

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and they richly deserved their fate. This was greedily swallowed, and the appetite for evil predictions and for professions of shame grew apace. Horace Walpole wrote in October 1755: 'In plain English we are going to be invaded.' 'Opposition must be wrong when we are ready to be eat up by the French,' wrote Potter to Pitt next year.

In May 1756 war against France was declared, and in confusion and despair commenced the world-wide and heroic struggle, out of which England was to emerge at the summit of her military glory, and with which there is for ever to be associated the mighty name of Pitt.

In October Fox resigned, disgusted with the jealousy and selfishness of Newcastle. The Duke, perceiving that he was helpless in his isolation, threw up office. The King asked Fox to form a Government. Pitt's assistance was obviously essential: but Pitt could not forget his grievance.* The King then desired a Government composed of Devonshire, Fox, Bedford, some of Newcastle's friends, and no Pitt. But Pitt meant to come in somehow. He condescended to call upon Lady Yarmouth: and the King was so far softened that the Duke of Devonshire was allowed to form a Government, with Pitt as his Secretary of State and real leader; with no Fox, and no Newcastle.

The event best remembered in connection with this short administration is the execution of Byng. It is not necessary to consider the justice or iniquity of this deed: it only concerns us to know that Pitt did his best to prevent it. Short of resigning, he went as far as he could towards

* Horace Walpole says: 'Pitt refused all in direct terms, alleging that the Duke of Newcastle had engrossed the King's whole confidence—and it was understood that he meant to put an exclusive negative on that Duke.'

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dissuading the King and appeasing the public. But the King was resolute, and the judgment, which was not passed in haste, was approved by the people in their wrath. It has even been suggested that Pitt sought to saddle the King with the responsibility of granting pardon because clemency would arouse resentment which he was not personally willing to encounter: but this is not clear. Temple made matters worse by telling his Sovereign that his own conduct at Oudenarde would compare unfavourably with Byng's at Minorca. 'The King already hated Temple more than he hated Pitt. He could endure their presence no longer. 'I do not look upon myself as King whilst I am in the hands of these scoundrels,' was his lament. Further friction is said to have been generated by the refusal of the Duke of Cumberland to take up his command in Flanders whilst Pitt was in office. In April 1757 Pitt and Temple were dismissed by King George.

Pitt had experienced difficulty in securing re-election upon taking office. In 1747 he had exchanged Old Sarum for Seaford; in 1754 he had been returned for Aldborough: but this was a borough under Newcastle's control, and now he was at issue with the Duke. He found a refuge at Okehampton, and next year migrated once more. This time he was returned for Bath and commenced the association with the city which is not the least of its claims to veneration, and which was continued in the person of his son.

Who was to form a Government now? The King applied to Waldegrave, who loyally made an attempt and speedily desisted. Two men were in different ways inevitable—Pitt and Newcastle: and here it should be

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observed again that the Duke, who is the object of such universal scorn, was strong enough to hold his own ; to get back into power and to bring Pitt with him as a subordinate colleague. Unwilling as Pitt may have been to recognise that he must put up with the Duke, the King was doubtless more reluctant to admit that there was no getting rid of Pitt. But so it was. Newcastle became First Lord ; Pitt was Secretary of State ; his old enemy, Granville, was Lord President ; and his recent rival, Fox, went back to the Paymaster's money-bags.

Pitt has been blamed for coming into accommodation with the men he hated and despised, instead of putting forth all his strength and asserting his sole authority without them. But he knew very well that beyond the family circle, which was neither wide enough nor firm enough to carry him on, he had no body of supporters. He saw the desperate case in which his country lay, and he meant to save her. Now came the glorious boast which he gloriously made good ; 'I am sure that I can save this country and that nobody else can.' Newcastle was equally intent upon office, but for other reasons : 'Though Newcastle hated Pitt as much as Pitt despised Newcastle,' it has been said 'they were united in one particular—that nothing should be done for the public service till they were ministers.'

We have now to notice the curious fact that although Pitt was by nature so austere and proud as to resemble an autocrat rather than an aspirant, he always exhibited towards his sovereign a diffidence and humility that can hardly have been feigned, and was too consistently maintained to have been assumed to conciliate the ill-humour of the moment. 'Pitt and Fox were impatient of any superior,' said

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Walpole ; in which case experience must have been painful to both of them. Again he speaks of Pitt's arrogance during the Devonshire Administration : ' Pitt now appeared as first minister ; yet between his haughtiness on the one hand and the little share he assumed, except in foreign affairs, on the other all application was made to the Duke of Devonshire.' When he unbent so far as to visit Lady Yarmouth, the Palace, where such intercourse went on daily, was filled with whispers of amazement. To his fellow-creatures at large he certainly showed a spirit of independence, a consciousness of superiority, little removed from scorn. Lord Macaulay says ' in truth, his tone, submissive in the closet, was at this time insupportably tyrannical in the Cabinet. . . . Conway, meek as he was, was on one occasion provoked into declaring that such language as Lord Chatham's had never been heard west of Constantinople. . . . [When he appeared in the House of Lords] he bade defiance to aristocratical connections with a superciliousness to which the Peers were not accustomed, and with tones and gestures better suited to a large and stormy assembly he was told very plainly that he should not be suffered to browbeat the old nobility of England.'

In the presence of royalty he was an altered man. George II. was slow to appreciate his great qualities. In 1757 he said to Granville, ' Would you advise me to take Pitt ?'

' Sir, you must take somebody.'

' What ! Would you have Pitt over you ?'

' While I am your Majesty's President, nobody will be over me.'

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And to Fox he confided his perplexity: 'What a strange country is this! I have never known but two or three men in it who understood foreign affairs: you do not study them—and yet here comes one man [Pitt] and says he has not so much as read Wicquefort, has all to learn, and demands to be Secretary of State.'

George II. could not forgive Pitt's rough language on the subject of Hanover, but to original prejudice he added a false estimate of merit. Presently his vision was enlightened: one of the earliest meetings between King and Minister was the occasion of seemly overtures of peace:

'Sire, give me your confidence and I will deserve it,' said Pitt.

'Deserve my confidence,' replied the King, not without dignity, 'and you shall have it.'

But subsequent interviews with his Sovereign were not always dignified. George III. hated Pitt more implacably than his grandfather before him. He was determined to be his own master, and dreaded any servant with purpose and power to control. Pitt's tenderness to the revolted Americans made him furious. When Parliament voted the bestowal of honours on Pitt's memory after death, the King told Lord North he regarded such tribute as an affront to himself. Yet before this ungracious master Pitt abased himself. Lord Fitzmaurice writes that he 'who would not tolerate dictation from King or aristocracy, veiled his rule over the former in forms and under expressions which, to those who knew him best, seemed redolent of more than courtier-like servility.' Whether he ruled the King or not, he certainly showed the servility. Burke once wrote, 'The least peep into that closet intoxicates him,

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and will to the end of his life.' As Pitt grew older he displayed a prodigality and pomp which was wanton and even vulgar. It might be thought that the extravagance of the Indian nabob was coming out in the third generation. He was dazzled and delighted with the pageantry of the Court. He possessed a dramatic sense which earned him comparison with Garrick. As he knelt before his Sovereign, he seems to have felt all the glamour and emotion of stage effect. When he resigned in 1761 the King, only too glad to be rid of him, spoke some gracious words: the tyrannical master of Cabinets burst into tears: 'Pardon me, sir, such goodness overpowers, it oppresses me.' In favour or out of favour his reverence remained unabated: 'At a levee,' we are told, 'he used to bow so low you could see the tip of his hooked nose between his legs.' He once wrote to Hardwicke, 'The weight of irremovable royal displeasure is a load too great for me to move under; it must crush any man; it has sunk and broken me. I succumb and wish for nothing but a decent and honourable retreat.'

Such was the infirmity—if that be not too hard a word—of the strong man whose greatness was now to come to its maturity. He made no scruple in adopting at once a system of German subsidies* and pleading the cause of Hanover. Now it was that he declared himself willing to restore Gibraltar† in exchange for a Spanish alliance against France for the recovery of Minorca. But

* He adopted Carteret's old maxim that France must be conquered on German soil, and declared that here it was that America was to be won.

† Lord Tyrawley, who was in command at Gibraltar, reported that it was a desolate port of no military value by reason of its configuration, and not worth any special attention.

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he was to find two allies worth more than the Spanish nation: Clive in India, and Wolfe in Canada were to reflect upon his name the imperishable lustre with which they glorified their own.

It may be a proper question for philosophical debate, what would be Chatham's reputation now if Clive had not defeated Duplex, nor Wolfe Montcalm. Cynics may ask what Chatham had to do with feats of arms upon the plains of India and on the Heights of Abraham. We must be content to answer that his was the mind that schemed, the courage that inspired, the energy that sustained. He chose his agents and, said Colonel Barré, 'nobody ever entered his closet who did not come out of it a braver man.' Lord Macaulay says in his glowing phrase, 'The ardour of his soul had set the whole kingdom on fire. It inflamed every soldier who dragged the cannon up the heights of Quebec, and every sailor who boarded the French ships among the rocks of Brittany.' Dr. Von Ruville is not behindhand with his tribute: 'It is indeed marvellous to observe how he was able to create armies and fleets and send them into action at a distance or close at hand, at a moment's notice or with long preparations, and with due regard to all known, and all possible conditions; how again he was able to abolish the carelessness, the want of initiative, the selfishness and red tape, which seemed permanently to have shackled English military power, and had hitherto prevented all decisive success.' This is probably no exaggeration. So direct and definite was his control that he even sent sealed orders to naval commanders without any communication with Anson, the First Lord of the Admiralty.

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When Pitt had been dismissed in April 1757 he had already secured so sure a hold upon public confidence that it was at once made evident that he was not to be deserted. The freedom of the city had been voted to him: 'for some weeks it rained gold boxes.' Before two years were over, Walpole wrote that the bells were worn threadbare with ringing for victory, and that every one asked when he was called in the morning what was the latest triumph to be celebrated. In spite of the necessary taxation, the country was advancing in prosperity: trade, so far from being hampered, was increasing: the country was growing richer.* The nation, says Lord Macaulay, was 'drunk with joy and pride,' and its idol was Pitt. He had overcome all his enemies: in the palace, in parliament, in the streets, his mastery was supreme and undisputed. His fame had spread abroad, and his personality inspired awe in every European chancery. He was 'regarded at home and abroad as sole minister,' is the comment of a modern historian.†

If Pitt's life had ended with that of George II. his name would perhaps stand even higher in English history than we find it. His successes were so many and so magnificent that they made men blind to the dangers in his path. His record for the moment seemed to be complete, and free from criticism. His later life was to be often and heavily clouded. And even now beneath the glittering surface there were latent flaws. It has been said that Pitt lacked either the power or the wish

* During the Seven Years War, seventy-five millions were added to the National Debt. During the wars of Napoleon, the younger Pitt added nine hundred millions—(Von Ruville).

† Lord Campbell, *Lives of the Chancellors*.

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to fortify his position by attaching to himself personal adherents. His sole support lay with the cousinhood. We have seen that he had already parted company with George Lyttelton. Temple was still his friend, but he was not a man of gracious temper; his loyalty was not always sure, nor his counsel always sound. Pitt, no doubt, entertained for him a regard based upon a sense of gratitude. Temple was an earl and the head of the connection: he had welcomed Pitt into the family as his sister's husband: he had even helped him with money at the time of his marriage. Whilst Pitt was thinking only of crowning his country with laurels, and welding into solid strength her foreign empire, Temple was intent on securing for his own person the decoration of the Garter. Aggrieved at what he considered a want of proper attention, he resigned. Pitt procured the blue riband from the King and Temple returned; but his pride was by no means satisfied. He was not at all content to be beholden to his brother-in-law, and complained that the bestowal should have been of the King's own movement. Jealousy had its way, and when Pitt added a quarrel with George Grenville to his score, Temple was not disinclined to take his brother's part. George Grenville, Pitt probably disliked. Their natures were dissimilar. Pitt was all for glory: Grenville had the 'craven fear of being great.' As Lord Macaulay says: 'Pitt could see nothing but the trophies; Grenville could see nothing but the bill.' When Pitt was no longer in the Government, Grenville one day was bemoaning the burden of taxation, and asked where fresh imposts could be justly laid: 'Tell me where,' he repeated again and again in a tone of misery, until Pitt chimed in with the

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words of the song, 'Gentle shepherd, tell me where'; and when Grenville protested, he left the House with a studied gesture of contempt. The name of Gentle Shepherd clung to Grenville, and it may easily be believed that he remembered whence it came.*

But besides personal friction there were springs whence cold water must at times have come to cool Pitt's ardour. In the midst of his wonderful prowess he found that people were far more ready to shout than to fight. Voluntary contributions of money were indeed not withheld; but personal service was not so easy to be had as a War Minister had a right to ask in return for such a feast of victory.

It was exasperating, if nothing more, to have French ships landing a force at Carrickfergus, and exacting tribute from Belfast before it could be driven back to sea and there destroyed. Finally, George II. died, and George III. came into his kingdom.

At this point we pass beyond our allotted period, but the story is too interesting to be left unfinished. With the change of Kings came a change of atmosphere. George II. had at last put his trust in Pitt and given him a generous support. George III. had no intention of doing anything of the kind. He meant to be ruler of the kingdom and to have nobody near him save those

* History repeated itself in the next generation. George Grenville's eldest son succeeded to the earldom of Temple: he deserted William Pitt in 1784, four days after taking office under him as Secretary of State, because he was denied a dukedom—so it is said. The third son, William Grenville, was Pitt's colleague, and was by him made a peer and leader of the House of Lords; but he eventually transferred his allegiance to Fox, without whom he refused to join Pitt's second administration in 1804, and with whom he formed the ministry of 'all the talents' after Pitt's death.

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of his own choosing. He called at once upon Bute, his mother's favourite and his own; and with him he composed a speech for Parliament without consulting Pitt. In this document Pitt's war was spoken of as bloody and expensive, and an honourable peace was declared to be an immediate necessity. Pitt succeeded so far as to get inserted the qualifying epithets of just and necessary so far as the war was concerned, and a recognition of the principle that no action could be taken without 'concert with our allies.' Then Holdernessee was got rid of, and Bute succeeded him as Secretary of State.

The war was, in fact, becoming unpopular: there was a general desire for peace. Frederick the Great had had enough: there was no powerful impulse left, unless it were with Pitt. He was not utterly deaf to the demand, but he was bent on treating with France as crushed and conquered or not at all. His tone has been described as 'peremptory and inflexible;' his conditions were not likely to be entertained by a proud nation still capable of resistance, and his overtures were doomed to certain failure. He then decided that the menacing attitude of Spain required that we should at once declare war and destroy her at a blow. She was known to be awaiting the arrival of treasure fleets which were to furnish her with the means of making ready. He would descend upon her colonies, capture her merchantmen and shatter her resources before she was equipped for carrying out the secret engagement that she was known to have made with France. The Cabinet refused, and Pitt resigned. Temple was not yet angry enough to make an open rupture, and bore him company. Next year war with Spain became inevitable, and Pitt had

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what comfort there is to be found in the useless vengeance of 'I told you so.'

There can be no doubt that George III. dreaded Pitt, who stood as an impediment in the way of his own arbitrary intentions. This was made manifest a little later, when Bute carried the Peace of Paris in spite of Chatham's protest. 'Now my son is really King,' cried the Princess Mother, when the opposition was overcome, and what she said was only the echo or inspiration of the sentiments of the King and the Minister. It cannot be doubted that throughout their connection he resented Pitt's imperious tone and governing power in Parliament, even if he were mollified by the flattery and obsequiousness with which he approached the palace. On the other hand he was clearly shrewd enough to appreciate the man with whom he had to deal. Before Grenville had been long Prime Minister (1763), he was horrified one day to find Pitt's chair outside St. James's, and to learn that the King, without his knowledge, and certainly without his consent, was making overtures to the man whom both regarded as a foe.

Whether the King was moved by glee at so happy a riddance, or was truly conscious of the great merits of his retiring servant, he was all graciousness to Pitt in October 1761. He offered to make him Governor of Canada with a special salary and exemption from residence: or if he preferred it, he should have the rich sinecure of Chancellor of the Duchy. Pitt would accept neither title nor position, but he consented to a peerage for his wife and a pension of 3000*l.* for himself and two succeeding lives. And it cannot be said that he made a favour of yielding so far. This is how he intimated his willingness to be beholden to the

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King: 'Overwhelmed with the extent of his Majesty's gracious goodness towards me, I desire the favour of your Lordship (Bute) to lay me at the royal feet, with the humble tribute of the most unfeigned and respectful gratitude. Penetrated with the bounteous favour of the most benign sovereign and master, I am confounded with his condescension in deigning to bestow one thought about any inclination of his servant, with regard to the modes of extending to me his royal beneficence. I have not words to express the sentiments of veneration and gratitude with which I receive the unbounded effects of beneficence and grace, which the most benign of sovereigns has condescended to bestow on me and those most dear to me.'

Pitt's enemies believed that the acceptance of these favours would react against his popularity. They counted upon representing him as a traitor to his principles with the same fatal consequences as had befallen Pulteney. They seized their opportunity, and the town was flooded with lampoons. But the City of London stood by him, and he was not to fall. When the King went to dine at the Guildhall, Pitt attended. The Sovereign passed unsaluted; the ex-minister was welcomed with a roar of enthusiasm. He has been blamed for putting this ungrateful and paltry affront upon the King, but it has been said that he was driven on by the rancorous malignity of Temple, and that he readily admitted his fault. In Parliament he refrained from all tokens of vindictiveness. He suffered acrimonious assaults unmoved: all he cared for, said he, was to see public affairs prudently conducted: personal recrimination was out of place: united action for the support of national interests was for the moment the whole duty of man.

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The Government, therefore, weakened as it was by his resignation, was not to be overthrown by his hostility. 'If we abandon our allies, God will abandon us,' was his theatrical exclamation. One cannot fail to be reminded of a similar utterance of Thurlow, which was certainly not admired. 'If I forget my King, may my God forget me,' cried the treacherous Chancellor in his distress. 'Forget you,' muttered Wilkes, who happened to be present, 'he will see you damned first.' 'The kindest thing he could do,' was the wittier and less irreverent comment of Burke.

In 1762 Newcastle found himself the object of such contemptuous neglect, that love of self outweighed his love of office, and he resigned. Bute became Prime Minister, and carried the Peace of Paris, which Pitt denounced as a miserable sequel to the glorious tale of triumphs of which it was his right to boast. 'It was the damndest peace for the Opposition,' said Wilkes, 'that ever was made.'

Bute was detested, and he knew it. He stood on a pinnacle and found his pre-eminence a place of danger. He suddenly resigned, and George Grenville became Prime Minister. Before long, the King had learnt to abhor Grenville, whose lectures drove him mad. He afterwards said he would sooner see the devil walk into his closet than George Grenville. We have seen that he turned to Pitt in his despair. The Duke of Cumberland was employed to carry negotiations further. Pitt was not prepared to act without Temple, and Temple raised objections. It is not unfair to suggest that he could not bring himself to assist at the restoration of his brother-in-law to a position which he himself coveted. They had not yet quarrelled irrevocably, and Temple had not definitely taken his brother's part. He

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was probably thinking more of his own position than that of George. Grenville fell, and Rockingham became Prime Minister (July 1765). Historians have agreed in censuring Pitt for refusing all invitations to join this ministry. There was no impediments in the form of principle; there was no obvious reason why Pitt should withhold from the nation the benefit of his great powers and wide experience. It has been said that Temple was his evil genius, and encouraged him in his obstinacy: it is certain that an adjustment was made more difficult by the advance of the strange symptoms which gout had developed in Pitt's nervous system.

During the five years (1761-6) that had passed since Pitt had left office, his part in public life had not been especially memorable. He had persecuted Grenville whilst he was occupied with Bute's cider tax. He had attacked him ardently when the Wilkes trouble began, and had condemned in the name of liberty the use of general warrants under which any suspected person was rendered liable to arrest; but the series of events which were principally to occupy his attention for the remainder of his life, and which were to afford perpetual and profound interest to posterity did not begin until 1765.

In order to have a clear recollection of the events which led up to and concluded the war of independence in America, it will be convenient both to go back a little and to look forward some way. In 1764 Grenville passed an Act imposing certain duties on the American colonies, and followed this up next year with the Stamp Act. Against this measure the Americans protested with energy: it was found impossible to enforce the use of stamped paper, and

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the revenue officials were dealt with savagely. In 1766 Rockingham repealed the Act with Pitt's cordial support. In July Pitt returned to office under Grafton's nominal leadership, and next year fresh taxation was imposed ; but it must be understood that Pitt had retired almost at once into morbid seclusion, and that Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer, had usurped entire control of the Cabinet. Townshend died. Pitt recovered to some extent, but in 1768 he quitted office for ever. Lord North succeeded Townshend as Chancellor, and in 1770 became first Lord of the Treasury when Grafton resigned. In 1770 he removed all the American taxes except that upon tea. Then came the riots in Boston, and the throwing of the tea-chests into the harbour. By this time the seed of rebellion had been sown, but the Home Government, intent upon other matters, failed to perceive its growth. The development of national feeling may be judged by the individual evolution of Franklin. He had been sincerely and loyally attached to England, where he had many personal connections. In 1726, when on the point of returning to America, he was nearly induced to settle permanently in England, and become teacher of swimming to the son of Sir William Wyndham.* In 1770 his romantic and rigorous apprenticeship was over, and his public position assured. He was still free from desire for rebellion or separation. In 1774 he appeared before the Privy Council to plead the Colonial cause, and was grossly insulted by Wedderburn. It is not unlikely that this experience taught him to despair of justice, and gave a strong impetus to his growing patriotism. He became American Ambassador in

* Autobiography.

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Paris, and when the time arrived for arranging peace, there was no one amongst the negotiators more stiff and more apt to be vindictive than he.

Fighting began in 1775 at Lexington and Bunker's Hill. Then followed the amazing series of campaigns which have lately been described anew in the beautiful volumes of Sir George Trevelyan. Washington was as much astonished then as we are now at the feebleness and sloth which repeatedly held back the British troops when it seemed that there was nothing to hinder them from annihilating their enemy. But most wonderful of all was the fate of Washington, who seldom won a victory, who after a decisive defeat at Brandywine in 1777 was able to keep together something of an army, half-naked and almost starved, through the awful winter at Valley Forge; who to the very end of the war had grave misgivings as to the steadfastness of his countrymen and the possibility of ultimate triumph; and who, in spite of all, emerged from the long and desperate struggle, not only victorious but the hero of the story.

The war dragged on in spite of the interference of France and Spain, and it was not until the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown in 1781, three years after Chatham's death, that the issue became inevitable—Lord North had long despaired of any other ending, but he was a Tory and a King's man. The King for one remained inflexible to the end and compelled his Minister to support him; but in 1782 North resigned. Lord Rockingham took office with Fox, pledged to acknowledge independence and arrange a peace. Their negotiations were clumsily conducted, and before terms were settled Rockingham died (July). Fox resigned: Shelburne became Prime Minister,

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with young Pitt as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and so it became one of the first official duties of Chatham's son to assist at the greatest amputation ever performed on the system of Empire which it had been his father's glory to foster and consolidate.

We return now to the year 1766. Rockingham was in office and had repealed the Stamp Act. Pitt, encouraged by Temple, was sulking: imagining slights and inventing grievances under the malign influence of gout. This year the whim of an eccentric stranger materially affected his position. Sir William Pynsent, of Burton Pynsent in Somersetshire, was a very old man of very bad reputation. He nourished a life-long grievance against the Tory party, dating from the day when he had left Parliament in disgust after the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht. Bute's recent ascendancy had revived his old rage against the Tory favouritism enjoyed by Harley: in the baffled energies of Chatham he saw reproduced the struggle of Marlborough against the ignoble jealousy of a faction. His heiress was married to Lord North, but North had added to his original sin of Toryism the offence of voting for the cider tax, to which Pynsent objected. Everything conspired to indicate Pitt as the man most worthy of his favour, and Pitt accordingly found himself in possession of a fine estate, an income of three thousand a year, and a sum of ready money ten times as great. It was perhaps a calamity for Pitt. He gave up the villa at Hayes, which he loved, and removed to his new estate, where his proneness to ostentation naturally grew by what it fed upon. Moreover the sense of importance which his inheritance awoke in his bosom helped to make his temper

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intractable and inclined him to listen to the mischievous counsels of Temple.

Temple and Pitt, however, were not to remain allies. The cousinhood had long been shaken, as we have seen. More than once there had been attempts at reconciliation: a dinner had been arranged to which Pitt had not refused to come: but with unconscious humour he had sternly refused to talk of politics. Now the fraternity was to be dissolved. Pitt ardently supported the repeal of the Stamp Act. Temple objected. They parted, and Temple went over to his brother George. His heart was set upon a revival of the Grenville administration with himself as leader. His brother-in-law he could not govern: his brother might be more amenable. The cousinhood was dead. 'I stand up in this place single and unconnected, was Pitt's embittered declaration next year in the House of Commons.

The attitude which Pitt took up and held throughout towards the Americans may be judged by an altercation which took place between him and Grenville during the debate on the repeal of the Stamp Act. Grenville had accused the repealers of teaching the Americans to rebel. 'The seditious spirit of the Colonies owes its birth to the factions in this House,' said he. 'We were told we trod on tender ground; we were bid to expect disobedience. What was this but telling the Americans to stand out against the law, encouraging their obstinacy with the expectation of support from hence? Let us only hold out a little, they would say; our friends would soon be in power.'

To which Pitt replied: 'Sir, I have been charged with

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giving birth to sedition in America. The Americans have spoken their sentiments with freedom against this unhappy Act, and that freedom has become their crime. . . . The gentleman (Grenville) asks, When were the Colonies emancipated? I desire to know when they were made slaves.'

To the end of his days he adhered to the principle that the supremacy of the Crown must be retained at all hazard, but that the Colonies must be treated with generosity and without suspicion of injustice: 'In whatever part of the Empire you suffer slavery to be established,' he said elsewhere, 'you will find it a disease which spreads by contact.'

In July 1766 the King decided to get rid of Rockingham and send for Pitt. For the moment he found in him a sympathetic spirit: the King was bent upon breaking up all powerful combinations such as had long governed the country and placed restrictions on the royal will. Pitt was disposed to agree. As we have seen, he was not a party man, and it would suit him very well to preside over a government of unconnected units bound together by no other principle than obedience to his will. Overtures were made, bargains offered and declined, negotiations attempted with Temple, to end only in a complete rupture. The Duke of Grafton was chosen as a figure-head: other offices were provided for not unsatisfactorily; and Pitt became Privy Seal and Earl of Chatham.*

We have noticed elsewhere the curious fact that at a time when power belonged almost as of right to the

* The second Duke of Argyle had been Baron Chatham and Duke and Earl of Greenwich. These titles died with him in 1743.

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peerage, the acceptance of a title was regarded as a betrayal of trust and was resented far more bitterly than it is in the days which we look upon as essentially democratic. When Pitt accepted a peerage for his wife there was a deliberate attempt to use it for his injury. Then the City exonerated him: this time he was not spared. Festivities organized in honour of his return to office were abandoned: he was actually burned in effigy. Yet his conduct was irreproachable. He was nearly sixty; his health had broken down: there was no objection, on the ground of convenience or of usage, to his sitting in the House of Lords. We need not repeat the comparison with the case of Lord Beaconsfield, but it should be noticed that his earldom was considered a disgrace to Pitt, whereas not a murmur was heard a century later when the same reward was bestowed upon Lord John Russell, a life-long Whig, and actually author of the truly democratic measure of 1832. Lord Macaulay entirely acquits Lord Chatham of insincerity or inconsistency, but he considers that he made a tactical blunder; he yielded up his strength as Samson shorn of his locks. 'Pitt was a charmed name,' he says: 'our envoys tried in vain to conjure with the name of Chatham.' Doctor von Ruville does not agree. Even after the breakdown and retreat in 1767, he says, 'Chatham's was a name which still inspired them (the hostile Powers) with profound respect.'

Indeed it mattered little if the 'Great Commoner' exchanged his popular title for another. As a ruler of Governments his days were numbered. He began with some signs of activity; he brought forward proposals for

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Indian reform, but allowed them to drop. He interested himself in Ireland and was disposed to deal with her in a liberal spirit. Some years later he expressed his approval of a measure which was brought forward, but lost, in the Irish Parliament for the taxation of absentee landlords. And he turned his attention at once to foreign affairs. He revived his old project of a continental alliance against France and Spain, but he found Frederick the Great in an unaccommodating mood, and his schemes were thwarted.

Then followed a period probably without parallel in the history of statesmen. Pitt disappeared. He went to Bath for the waters, but they did him no good. He came back, and was forced to halt at an inn at Marlborough. Here his symptoms became manifestly those of insanity: secluded though he was, he insisted that every servant and hanger-on about the house should be decked out in the Chatham liveries. No matter what may be the correct medical definition, Chatham's conduct was now that of a madman. He would see no one; he would correspond with no one. He sat alone in utter dejection: at the mention of politics he burst into tears. Together with this political humiliation there grew upon him a reckless prodigality in his personal indulgence. His appetite was capricious: consequently dinner after dinner had to be cooked and wasted, in order that he might be served to his taste whenever the humour came. He began to adorn Burton Pynsent. Cartloads of cypresses were transported at heavy cost from London, and so hot was his impatience, that he ordered the planting work to be continued at night by torchlight. Then he conceived a craving to go back to Hayes. He had a villa at

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Hampstead, but he wanted his old home. Lady Chatham succeeded in buying out their successor, and they returned. Not content with this, Chatham incurred further heavy expense in buying out his neighbours also, in order that his seclusion might be uninterrupted. Meanwhile his Government drifted on as best it could, and one result of its demoralised condition was, as we have seen, that Charles Townshend resumed the fatal policy of taxing the Americans. What might have happened if Chatham had been there to forbid it, is a problem too extensive to consider now. It is difficult to believe that the destiny of America could have been entirely diverted; but it might have worked itself out otherwise.

There is another opportunity for speculation, more romantic perhaps but less worth indulging, in the yielding of England to the French conquest of Corsica in 1768. Had Chatham been at hand, it is probable that he would have resisted; in which case Napoleon would have been born a British subject. Our tenure of the island was precarious and not much more than nominal: our claim upon the loyalty of the young islander might very well have been the same.

During the year 1768 Chatham's position was almost grotesque. He remained inaccessible, shrouded in mystery that no one could penetrate or explain. The Government was decaying for want of his invigorating spirit: they sought his counsel in vain. The King, not loving him, was forced into the position of a suppliant. At all events it was an asset to have him nominally in office: 'Though confined to your house,' wrote this arbitrary monarch, 'your name has been sufficient to enable my administra-

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tion to proceed. I, therefore, in the most earnest manner call on you to continue in your employment.' But Chatham was beyond the seduction of royalty. By the hand of his wife he made petition in his most florid style to be permitted to retire, and in October he was relieved of further responsibility. It is little exaggeration to say that by this time he was indeed as much forgotten as if he were already lying in Westminster Abbey.

Presently a violent attack of gout relieved the nervous disorder and Chatham suddenly appeared at a Levee, ready to confront his fellow-men. It was as if a ghost had come amongst them, and politicians were agog to see what would happen next. Chatham intended to return to politics, but his conduct had placed him in a lonely and uncomfortable predicament. A formal reconciliation with Temple and Grenville was achieved: they had another dinner, which must have been as frigid and inconclusive as the gathering of 1763. He was alienated from Grafton, with whose management of affairs he was entitled to find fault. He made overtures to Rockingham, and eventually they drew towards one another; but Rockingham, who was not without cause for misgiving, withheld full confidence, and the union was never intimate. The first sign of this conjunction was, however, sufficient to draw away a section of Grafton's Government. In January 1770 the wreck broke up, and North was installed in office. The title of Prime Minister he always repudiated both in public and private life.

In the years that followed Chatham took a considerable part in the business of the House of Lords. His interest in India and Ireland was not extinct. In 1771

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he professed so much alarm at the state of the nation that he moved for a dissolution of Parliament and declared himself a convert to triennial elections. The obsequious language of the Court was put aside; he roundly averred that the Crown was encroaching on the prerogative of Parliament. Nor did he flatter the representatives of the people: 'Who can wonder,' he asked, 'that you should put a negative on any measure which must annihilate your power, deprive you of your emoluments, and at once reduce you to the state of insignificance for which God and nature designed you?' And he had no hesitation in denouncing the action of Government in refusing to recognise the election of Wilkes for Middlesex.

But the only portion of his work that need be noticed is his support of the American revolt. His point of view has already been indicated: 'The spirit which resists your taxation in America is the same that formerly opposed . . . ship money in England,' he told the House of Lords. Yet he was never reconciled to the prospect of separation. 'He could never tolerate the idea of an independent America,' he said in 1776, 'though he foresaw the danger at a very early stage of the conflict.' Two years before this he had said, 'I fear the bond between us and America will be cut off for ever. Devoted England will then have seen her best days, which nothing can restore again. Although I love the Americans as men prizing and setting a just value upon that inestimable blessing, liberty, yet if I could once persuade myself that they entertain the most distant intention of throwing off the legislative supremacy . . . and power and control of British Legislature, I should myself be the very person

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. . . . to enforce that power by every exertion this country is capable of making.' It is to be believed that Chatham did doubt both the desire and the power of America to assert their independence in the face of opposition from home.

Nothing in the history of the war is more remarkable than the doubts entertained by the Americans themselves until the last moment*—doubts which were shared, not unmixed with indignation and disgust, by their French allies. The loyalist element was formidable and, in spite of small encouragement, remained wonderfully faithful. The military spirit amongst the patriotic party was, with the exception of a devoted minority, very far from noble. Chatham believed that even in the middle of the struggle the disaffected might be won back to their allegiance and enlisted in the cause of England, even as the Highlanders of Scotland had been won over to loyalty and turned to use. As a matter of fact the patriots of America were sadly remiss in responding to the call of their own Congress, and displayed nothing like the self-sacrifice and valour of their children in their internal struggle of 1861–5. But Chatham had good authority for his belief. In 1774–5 he conferred with Franklin and actually introduced a Bill

* In 1780 Washington wrote, that it was little less than a miracle that the revolution had not long since terminated. The chief reason for its continuance was, in his opinion, the strange inactivity and folly which England had shown during the early stages. After his defeat at Brandywine in 1777, a French officer wrote home that 'if the English had followed their advantage that day, Washington's army would have been spoken of no more. In 1781 Washington wrote to Franklin in Paris: 'Our present situation makes one of two things essential to us; a peace, or the most vigorous aid of our allies.' Even later, when peace was actually assured, Livingstone, not knowing it, wrote to him that without further subsidies from France it would be impossible for the Americans to hold out longer.

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for 'Settling the troubles in America, and for asserting the supreme legislative authority and superintending power of Great Britain over the colonies.' He aimed avowedly at concession and conciliation. Referring to former measures which had stirred up the disaffection he said, 'It is not by repealing this Act of Parliament; it is not by repealing a piece of parchment that you can restore America to our bosoms. You must repeal her fears and her resentment, and you may then hope for her love and gratitude.' How far Franklin was sincere; how far he had advanced along the path which ultimately brought him to the stage of uncompromising and irreconcilable hostility, it is not easy to say; but this is what he said to Chatham: 'Having more than once travelled almost from one end of the continent to the other and kept a great variety of company — eating, drinking, and conversing with them freely, I have never heard in any conversation from any person, drunk or sober, the least expression of a wish for a separation, or hint that such a thing would be advantageous to America.' And Chatham continued in this belief. The King, of course, wished to treat the Americans as disorderly rebels. His one desire was to punish them; his firm resolve was to yield not one point in their favour. It may be believed, therefore, that Chatham's speeches had undone all the effect that time and circumstances had worked upon King George's mind, and that he hated him more bitterly than he had done fifteen years before: Chatham, he said, was the trumpet of sedition.

Chatham's health gave way again and his energies were interrupted; but his purpose never wavered. His

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determination to resist the demand for independence was fortified by the assistance which France had given to the Americans. If it were only to deny to his inveterate enemy the opportunity of avenging their own defeats upon the American Continent by wounding England there, he would fight it out to the end. He had made his own son leave the army in order that he might not be employed against the Americans: no sooner were they supported by French arms and subsidies than he allowed him to rejoin.

In 1778 the state of affairs was so desperate that there was a universal cry for Chatham: politicians and the public were alike persuaded that in his genius for victory lay their only hope of salvation. Chatham was not wholly deaf to this appeal, but two obstacles prevented a ready acquiescence. Rockingham, his obvious colleague, had abandoned resistance and was in favour of unconditional surrender. Chatham even now would be no party to this. And the King was so dismayed at the proposal of receiving Chatham, that he vowed he would rather abdicate than have him back again: 'I solemnly declare that nothing shall bring me to treat personally with Lord Chatham,' he said.

On April 7th, 1778, the Duke of Richmond brought forward a motion in the House of Lords urging, on behalf of the Rockingham Whigs, that the independence of America should be recognised forthwith. If Chatham, indeed, loved dramatic effect he had his heart's desire here. No scene in history is more familiar, but it is generally misconceived. Realism has been given to it by Copley's famous picture; but this is itself, to some

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extent, responsible for the error. It is called the Death of Chatham. Had Chatham, indeed, fallen dead in the act of protesting against the violation of our Empire, there would have been inspiration for many painters and poets. The moment was not of such dreadful consequence as that; but it was sufficiently solemn. The figure of the stately old man, crippled with age and suffering, was at once an object of compassionate awe. The occasion was profoundly grave; his own achievements, familiar to all the world, gave him especial title to take a prominent part. For us the imagination is further excited by the contemplation of his son William, whose arm helped to sustain the feeble limbs and guide the devoted orator to his seat. We know, as the peers could not know then, that the son who was to witness the last flicker of the sinking flame, who was to assist at the fearfully agitating crisis, was himself on the threshold of a career, not less arduous and splendid, not less free from disappointment and final anguish, not less celebrated in our national legend than that which was now to be ended.

It is said that Chatham's appearance was attended by a display of true courtliness on the part of the peers of all parties: they rose at his approach. So sorely stricken was he that there was no prospect of a noble flight of eloquence. He had risen from his bed, he told them, old and infirm as he was, with more than one foot in the grave, to stand up for the cause of his country, probably for the last time. Then a ray of the old splendour burst through the clouds of depression: 'My Lords, I rejoice that the grave has not closed upon me; that I am still able to lift up my voice against the dismemberment of

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this ancient and noble monarchy. Shall this great kingdom now fall prostrate before the House of Bourbon? If we must fall, let us fall like men.' The Duke of Richmond did all that good feeling could suggest to spare, in his reply, the shaken spirits of the man he had to discredit. But Chatham's soul was in arms, and with a final effort he sprung again into the fray where all his glory had been won. He rose, hesitated, pressed his hand upon his heart, and fell back unconscious.

But Chatham was not dead. After a few days he was taken down to Hayes. It was even rumoured that the attack was not mortal, and that he would speedily return to Parliament. These predictions were baseless, and on May 11th it was known that he was dead. Neither Chatham, nor Pitt, his son, can be said to have been *felix opportunitate mortis*. The news of Austerlitz broke William's heart, and added bitterness to his death, if it did not actually bring it to pass. Chatham died with his eyes intent upon what he deemed to be the ruin of the empire that he had spent his life in building up. His permanent and deliberate policy had been to break the power of France. He had crushed it and swept it off the continent of America; and now it was only the succour of the French that had enabled British subjects in America to succeed in their purpose of rebellion.

There is a growing disposition to disparage the memory of the younger Pitt; to throw strong light upon his failures, and to dwell much upon the terrible sacrifices that he required of his generation of taxpayers and the debt that he left to their successors. He had no Wolfe and Clive to win him laurels; his brother, Chatham, and the Duke of York were

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poor substitutes for these.* His best asset was Nelson, and for some reason Nelson's sea victories have never been associated with the name of the Minister as were the land fights in Chatham's day. Chatham, on the other hand, had no Napoleon to contend against. If in this world there be such a thing as luck, Chatham was certainly the luckier of the two. But, in forming judgments upon illustrious men, no allowance must be made for luck. When Chatham died he had not to bow his head in entire abasement over the wreck of his own handiwork. He had conquered France, and she had not yet repaired the damage he had inflicted, nor had the triumphs with which he had delighted his country been too dearly bought. When Pitt died he had no dazzling record to console him; he had long been at war with France without conspicuous success, and her last and greatest conquests were to him a final agony. There was to be for him no share in the lustre of Wellington's fame; the tide had not yet turned. He had the instinct of a financier, which his father had lacked; he had, therefore, none of his father's joy in war for war's sake. It was his desire rather to cherish the financial resources of the nation, after the manner of Walpole; and it was his fate to leave them disordered and heavy laden. His father had cared nothing for economy, yet he had cost the country little in comparison with his son, who cared for it very much. Judged, therefore, by the test of success, one need not hesitate to say that Chatham, as a manager of State, was greater than his great son. He lived in days when what we call social reform counted for little. Posterity cannot rise up and call him blessed because he readjusted the

* Honour is due to the memory of such men as Sir Ralph Abercromby.

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franchise or promoted factory legislation, or devised a non-contentious Education Bill, or invented old-age pensions. His conception of a statesman's duty was to guard his country's honour, and to see that it stood high; and it was a standard of excellence which few of his contemporaries would have been found to condemn. He had some disadvantages and a considerable number of shortcomings to contend against. He was not necessarily the noblest of mankind, but in the ranks of the statesmen of all ages he must certainly be conspicuous for qualities which, by universal consent, are the emblems of true greatness.

In this very brief and superficial comparison only one other difference need be noted. Pitt, the son, was notoriously reserved and cold in official life, but he could be playful with children, and agreeable in private life; and he is credited with two jests, which proved that he had a lurking vein of humour. When Volunteers were being enrolled, one corps sent in a list of conditions, each of which ended with 'except in actual case of invasion.' The last condition was that they were never to be sent out of the country. Against this Pitt wrote 'except in actual case of invasion.' Once when he was intoxicated in the House of Commons, the Clerk at the Table said he was so much shocked that he had a headache. Pitt said it was a capital arrangement: 'I will have the wine and he shall have the headache.' Study of Lord Chatham's life leaves no impression of social amiability; his austerity appears to have been used for permanent wear. There is certainly no evidence that he ever made a joke, unless his insult to Grenville can be deemed facetious. Yet his

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character in private life was not displeasing. He married Temple's sister in 1754, and here, at all events, he must be counted as a lucky man. Lady Chatham was a good and wise woman. Her husband's infirmities must have tried her tact and temper most severely, but her patience never failed. In his darkest moments she alone was permitted to bring him back to thoughts of business; she was the medium of communication between him and the King. She was certainly not a meek and purposeless creature; to her sons she wrote letters of instruction and advice after the manner of the most despotic parent, and she never forgot the sacred authority of motherhood even when her second born was Prime Minister.

Chatham himself devoted much care to the training of his boys. There is a curious instance of this in the anecdote recorded by John Cam Hobhouse. Lord Sidmouth told him that he had seen Lord Chatham sit for an hour and a half while Gallini, the dancing-master, taught his sons their steps. William used to be refractory, and Lord Chatham would shake him by the lapel and bid him attend.* William was a delicate child. Partly for this reason, partly, perhaps, because his father detected his dawning genius, he was the favourite pupil. Lord Chatham read with him, and encouraged him to train his faculties with private study. His precept for the practice of oratory was to translate at sight into the best possible language chosen passages from the classics.

John, the eldest son, and second Earl of Chatham, is usually written down as a nonentity who held offices, by favour, for which he was unfit. He is, indeed, best re-

* *Recollections of a Long Life*, i. 48.

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membered by a ridiculous stanza, which celebrates his achievements as a commander in Holland.*

The Earl of Chatham, with sword drawn,
Stood waiting for Sir Richard Strahan ;
Sir Richard, dying to be at 'em,
Stood waiting for the Earl of Chatham.

He had entered the army young and had seen service in Canada. Beyond his military promotion, which led to no notable results, he became a Cabinet Minister, and it is right to observe that one shrewd observer, Lord Eldon, who had ample opportunities of judging, declared that he was not inferior to his brother in ability, and was one of the best Cabinet colleagues he ever had. In Lord Eldon's opinion, the earlier and easier access to life afforded to an eldest son had deprived him of those advantages of a careful training which had been enjoyed by William.† James Pitt, the youngest son, entered the Navy, and died of fever in the West Indies in 1780.

One or two criticisms upon Chatham's style may be added to show the varying estimates of his contemporaries. In Grattan's opinion he was 'perhaps not so good a debater as his son, but he was a much better orator, a greater scholar, and a far greater man.' It may have been his scholarly instinct which prejudiced him against lawyers: the style of the advocate perhaps seemed to him unsuited to political oratory. At all events, he hated lawyers, with the exception of Dunning (Lord Ashburton), whom he admired as 'another man from any he had known in his profession.' This hostility may,

* He served there with the rank of Major-General in 1799.

† Twiss's *Life*, ii. 560.

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however, have been provoked by the rivalry which long existed between himself and Murray (Lord Mansfield), with whom he was often in sharp conflict. According to one looker-on, 'The Court did not prevail by numbers only : in all debates of consequence, Murray, the Attorney-General, had greatly the advantage over Pitt in point of argument, and, abuse only excepted, was not much his inferior in any part of oratory.' But we may set against this another not less competent judgment : 'The one (Murray) spoke like a pleader, and could not divest himself of a certain appearance of having been employed by others. Pitt spoke like a gentleman, like a statesman, who felt what he said, and possessed the strongest desire of conveying that feeling to others for their own interest and that of their country. Murray gains your attention the other commands your attention. . . . For this talent he possesses beyond any speaker I ever heard, of never falling from the beginning to the end of his speech, either in thought or expression. . . . I think him sincerely the most finished character I ever knew.'

That Chatham's style was marked by peculiar vehemence is clearly shown in this contrast : 'Fox always spoke to the question, Pitt to the passions; Fox to carry the question, Pitt to raise himself; Fox pointed out, Pitt lashed the errors of his antagonists; Pitt's talents were likely to make him soonest, Fox's to keep him first minister longest.' Though the fate of Fox did not confirm the inference drawn, Lord Macaulay has said of the character of Chatham that it was a rare case of genius without simplicity. One cannot fail to notice the frequent occurrence of phrases that suggest a studied ornateness of

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diction and gesture. It was probably not the malice of enemies alone that detected in his parade of suffering a skilful playing on the sympathy of Parliament by turning to account the anguish of his bedroom. He lacked simplicity in all things, but the grand manner came from the aspiring of a masterful spirit and was not the vulgar affectation of a self-conscious mountebank. To this natural effulgence may be due the credit which Chatham has obtained, and with some critics still retains, of being none other than Junius. It is superfluous to state the arguments anew; no plea for his authorship will be attempted here at all events. But before dismissing the suggestion it may be worth while to notice that the periods which rolled from his tongue in such majesty and splendour were not always as ready to serve him when he took up his pen. Wilkes called him the worst letter-writer of the age. Lord Shelburne declared that neither Granville nor Chatham could write a decent letter. Finally, no matter what reservations must be made, we are entitled to look back upon Chatham with wonder and delight. The concluding sentence of Macaulay's second essay has perhaps done even more than the statue which it describes to lift him high amongst the company of those whom we hold in memory as worthy to be praised. The quality which for its purity and depth was most admirable in him was courage, and we can pay unfeigned honour to the high-souled patriotism that never failed to 'bid England be of good cheer and to hurl defiance at her foes.'

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